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# INDIA REFORM.

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No. I.

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THE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
SINCE 1834.

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# INDIA REFORM.

## THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SINCE 1834

"Our Indian Government, in its best state, will be a grievance. It is necessary that the correctives should be uncommonly vigorous: the work of men sanguine, firm, and even impassioned. For it is an arduous thing to plead against the uses of a power which originates from your own country, and which affects those are used to consider as strangers."—*Burke, in 1783.*

"An intelligent people would not submit to our rule."

*Lord Ellenborough, in 1852.*

IN closing the Parliamentary Session of 1833, King William IV., usual, reviewed the measures which had been enacted. Amongst them was the Act for providing for the better government of India; and of it his Majesty remarked, "I have the most confident expectation that the system of Government thus established will prove to have been wisely framed for the improvement and happiness of the natives of India." That Statute is now approaching its termination; and the Prime Minister has announced the intention of the Queen's Cabinet to propose to Parliament the renewal of the Indian Government on the same basis as that which was established in 1833, with some modifications in its details only. The question then arises, is this system of Government as "wisely framed" in 1833, as the King "most confidently expected?" And has it promoted "the improvement and happiness of the Natives of India?" If it have not, the ground for its renewal on the same basis, will be cut from beneath the feet of the responsible advisers of Queen Victoria. For, to renew what has produced unworthy or mischievous results, of course confirmed and aggravated previous evils and disorders in India, to endanger the integrity of the Empire which it is their duty to strengthen and protect.

The enquiry is, hand, and the issue now raised by the effluxion of the Charter Act cannot be better stated than in the language used by the late King. It denotes, in the simplest terms, the purpose of the Statute—"the improvement and happiness of the natives



Scinde, the Indian Government brought itself into contact with hostile tribes, residing in mountain fastnesses, and laid itself open to constant attack in its front. Worse still, it alarmed the Government of the Punjab in the very crisis and agonies of its history.

The death of the remarkable Prince, who had so long ruled that country with wisdom, energy, and foresight, was followed by civil war. And at this juncture the Indian Government thrust itself in the way of the contending factions; and by its aggressions on their neighbours, by its collection of troops on their frontiers, and by its occupation of neutral territory, alarmed them for their own safety. The Army in a state of revolt was led to the Sutlej to be slaughtered by the English, and it was not till four severe general actions had been fought on the south bank of the Sutlej in seven weeks, that our army could venture across that river. These battles cost us considerably dearer in the ratio of casualties than the victory of Waterloo. Instead, however, of retiring into its own territories, the Indian Government undertook the administration of a country it had not conquered. Its mismanagement brought on another sanguinary war; the discomfited army again rallied around its leaders, and gave employment to a British force of not less than thirty-five thousand men, during the greater part of a year. At length the military insurrection was put down; the infant Prince punished for our misdeeds by dethronement and banishment; and the Punjab placed under the sole management of European officers. But has this conquest made India more secure? Not at all. It has only increased the danger. On the Western frontier it is a continuation of that of Scinde; it lies between us and the unforgiving Affghans; and our army in advance (placed in the territory of subordinate but discontented Affghan chiefs) is in a constant state of petty warfare.

What yearly amount of pecuniary burthen our recent territorial acquisitions may have brought on the Indian finances, it is very difficult to discover, so ill made out are the Finance Accounts laid annually before Parliament; but in each case the burthen is undoubtedly great. The revenues of the Punjab are, *assumed*, by the Court of Directors, to be £1,300,000; and the average of its civil charges has already reached £1,120,000, leaving an apparent

surplus of £180,000 per annum. But this is apparent only. For, correspondingly wrote the Court of Directors to the Governor-General in Council, on the 3rd of June, 1852, the £180,000 "include none of the charges of the regular troops, nor the expenses of barrack accommodation." Now the average of military charges throughout India exceeds 56 per cent of the net revenue; and in the Punjaub, a newly conquered country, where there is an army, probably 50,000 strong, the military charges can hardly be less than one million sterling; a sum that will make the Punjaub a charge and a burden of about £800,000 a year on the general revenues of India.

Equally difficult is it to make out the actual cost of Scinde; its "probable" expense the Directors admit to be . . . £480,000

Deduct Revenue . . . £280,000

Probable charge or loss in Scinde . . . £200,000

So, too, Sattara, which to its own Prince yielded a large surplus; it was annexed in the hope of gain to the general revenue; its annexation has proved a loss.

Its expenses in 1850-1 were . . . £240,623

Its receipts . . . £205,240

Actual loss by Sattara . . . £35,383

"We certainly were not prepared," says the Court to Lord Dalhousie, in reviewing these figures, "to find that the annexation of Sattara would entail a charge upon the general resources of India." Those who knew the system better, were, however, less credulous than the Court of Directors; they were prepared for what has happened.

But scarcely at peace beyond its natural limits on the North-west, the Indian Government has rushed into war beyond its natural limits on the East. A mountainous country separates Bengal from Burmah, across which troops cannot be marched. The Burmese have nothing to do with India. They are not formidable or dangerous. There is no hostile Persia beyond Burmah. There is no Russia to urge a warlike people on to attack India from this side. To go to war with Burmah, the Indian Government is obliged to take to the sea. Yet not only is it engaged in a war with Burmah, costing £120,000 a month and probably far more; but, by annexing Pegu, it indicates its

intention, rather of never being at peace, or of going on advancing frontiers to the borders of Siam. At the close of the war of 1815, England might as rationally have annexed Normandy, as India now annex Pegu. For, as in Europe, England possesses limits, which nature itself—which ethnology, geography, history, have all united to assign to it; so also in India. There, too, we have boundaries unmistakably fixed by nature. But, as in the West, so in the East, these are now abandoned; and besides the cost of past wars, and of the present war, the Natives of India will have to bear the burthens of future wars; as inevitable as Kaffir hostilities, unless a thorough change in our system be now adopted.

Applying, then, the test of Peace to the last twenty years, what opportunity, what means, what chances, can a Government, occupied more or less with war for fifteen of those years, have had of working out the improvement and the happiness of the Natives? No man can serve two masters. No Government—above all, no Foreign Government,—can recompense a people for the misery, the cost, and the burthen of war. War requires all the energy, all the mind, all the money, a Government can avail itself of. What war, during the greater part of the currency of the present Charter Act, has had the benefit of in India, the Natives have been deprived of. They have not had the energy, the mind, or the money of the Government applied to their improvement or happiness.

## II. FINANCES.

And the effect of this deprivation is to be seen in the state of the Finances of India; PECUNIARY PROSPERITY being the second great test of good government everywhere.

In England a deficit in the Treasury is the most heinous of all Government offences. No Administration can survive for three years a want of equilibrium in our receipts and expenditure, no matter how small. We regard, too, other countries in Europe as comparatively strong or weak according to their financial position, and we are continually inferring danger to the stability of order in Austria from the disorders of its Treasury. Turn to India, and what, during the

Last fourteen years, do we find? Deficit—deficit—deficit—here it is in detail.

	DEFICIT.	SURPLUS.
1838-9 . . . . .	£381,000	
1839-40 . . . . .	2,138,000	
1840-1 . . . . .	1,754,000	
1841-2 . . . . .	1,771,000	
1842-3 . . . . .	1,346,000	
1843-4 . . . . .	1,440,000	
1844-5 . . . . .	583,000	
1845-6 . . . . .	1,495,376	
1846-7 . . . . .	971,202	
1847-8 . . . . .	1,911,791	
1848-9 . . . . .	1,473,115	
1849-50 . . . . .		£354,187*
1850-1 . . . . .	631,173	

In the greater part, therefore, of the twenty years of the present Charter Act, the deficit of the India Government has been as chronic as the state of war. In 13 years, it will be seen that it has amounted, in the face of an increasing revenue, to the amazing sum of £15,541,470; all provided for, of course, by loans and debt; agencies adverse to, not promotive of, the improvement and happiness of the people.

When the present system of Government was framed in 1833, the military charges of India were about eight millions sterling, or 49 per cent of its net revenue. Twenty years of anticipated "improvement and happiness" have now almost elapsed, and the military charges now exceed twelve millions sterling, and eat up 56 per cent of the net revenue. In other words, the large cash balances that were in the Treasury in the early part of the year 1838, and the increase of revenue that has concurrently been going on, have not only been absorbed by military charges; but it is those charges which have produced this continuous state of deficit, and which have augmented the Indian debt from £30,000,000, as it stood when the Act passed, to £50,000,000, as it will stand when the Statute, that was to do so much good to India, will expire. Out of twenty years, fifteen years of war; in thirteen years a deficit of 15½ millions sterling; twenty millions sterling added to the debt. These are the first results of the legislation of 1833, which arrest our path in clearing the way for legislation in 1853.

\* The surplus this year arises out of the accidental increase of the precarious

### III. MATERIAL IMPROVEMENTS.

Of course, a system of government which in the last twenty years has gone on increasing its military expenditure from eight to twelve millions sterling, and thus adding to its debt, has had little to spend on what are, in such a country as India, the next evidence of good government—PUBLIC WORKS. Lord Auckland, the first Governor-General after the enactment of 1833, commenced his administration by recognising the construction of roads, bridges, harbours, tanks, and irrigation works, as a primary duty of the Indian Government. But, having recognized the duty, his Lordship immediately proceeded to disable himself from discharging it, by beginning that career of warfare which is still going on. So, that out of a revenue exceeding 21 millions sterling, the rate of government expenditure on public works has, according to Mr. Campbell,\* been  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, or less than £500,000 a year, spread over a country as large as Europe; for British India contains an area of 1,294,602 square miles. And of this half million, by far the greater part is spent on the favoured and no doubt very important North-Western Provinces. They yield a net-revenue of four and a half millions sterling, and of it have seven and a half per cent spent on improvements. Whilst on Madras, with a net revenue of nearly four millions, only one half per cent is so laid out; though in Madras the land assessment falls far heavier on the cultivators than in any other part of India, though the soil pants for moisture, and though whole rivers of fertilising waters run to waste for want of irrigation works. Bengal contributes more than eight millions sterling net, and receives one per cent back in the construction of roads, &c., and Bombay the same per centage on its net revenue of £2,300,000. Here stands the account for 1849-50; the year in which there was a small surplus.

	POPULATION.	SQ. MILES.	NET REVENUE.	PUBLIC WORKS.
BENGAL	41,000,000	225,000	£ 8,500,000	£ 92,200
N. W. PROV.	23,000,000	85,000	4,500,000	348,000
MADRAS	22,000,000	140,000	3,779,000	14,919
BOMBAY.	10,405,000	120,000	2,337,000	24,743

And of these sums so debited against public works, some portion is, it must be borne in mind, spent on barracks and purely military

\* *Modern India*. Mr. Campbell is a writer favourable to the existing Indian administration, but in the statistical papers just put into circulation by the Court of Directors. the total average expenditure on public works. during fourteen

undertakings. The figures, too, include the cost of superintendence ; which has sometimes wasted 70 per cent. of the outlay.

#### IV. CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

But, in spite of war, deficit, and want of roads, bridges, harbours, and public works,—in spite of this, the CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE may have improved during the last twenty years? Try the Act of 1833, then, by this test. There can be none better or surer. In India, however, it is necessary to recollect, the British Government is more than the Ruler and Governor of the people ; it is their Landlord also. Thus it is doubly bound to them. It has its duties as Proprietor, as well as its obligations as Administrator to perform ; it has Tenants, as well as Subjects to look after, to care for, and to protect ; it acts directly, as well as indirectly on the cultivation and on the cultivators of the soil ; and it is immediately, as well as mediately responsible for its state and their condition. Remembering this, first let us go to our oldest provinces, where there is what is called a permanent land settlement ; permanent, however, only to the middle man ; fluctuating beyond even Irish fluctuation, to the cultivator. “In the fertile districts of Lower Bengal,” says a thoroughly well-informed writer in the *Calcutta Review*, No. XII.

“So bountifully intersected by noble rivers fed by tributary streams and rivulets, which spread perennial verdure and luxuriance over fields and plains, and constituting links of communication, stimulate and promote the alacrity and bustle of traffic,—there is to be found a community leading a life such as to call forth sympathy and commiseration. The community we allude to, is that of the Bengal Ryot. The name is familiar here as one expressive of an ignorant, degraded, and oppressed race.”

“To whatever part of Bengal we may go, the Ryot will be found, ‘to live all his days on rice, and to go covered with a slight cotton cloth.’ The profits which he makes are consumed in some way or other. The demands upon him are almost endless, and he must meet them one by one. This prevents the creation of capital, and prolongs the longevity of the Mahajani [or usurious money-lending] system. The districts of Bengal are noted for fertility and exuberance of crops ; and if the Ryots could enjoy freedom and security, the country would exhibit a cheering spectacle. But their present condition is miserable, and appears to rouse no fellow feeling, no sympathy, in those by whom they are surrounded. The monthly expense of a Ryot is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 rupees ;\* and if he has a family, it must be proportionately higher. We do not believe that there are in all

\* A rupee may be reckoned as 2 shillings of English money.

the districts five in every hundred, whose *whole* annual profits exceed one hundred rupees!

"In many instances the earnings of a Ryot are not sufficient for his family; and his wife and sons are obliged to betake themselves to some pursuit, and assist him with all they can get. He lives generally upon coarse rice and dhol; vegetables and fish would be luxuries. His dress consists of a bit of rag and a slender chudder; his bed is composed of a coarse mat and a pillow; his habitation, a thatched roof and his property, a plough, two bullocks, one or two lotahs and some *bijghan*. He toils 'from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve,' and despite this he is a haggard, poverty-smitten, wretched creature. This is no exaggeration; even in ordinary seasons, and under ordinary circumstances, the Ryots may often be seen fasting for days and nights for want of food."

"The inability of the Ryot to better his degraded condition, in which he has been placed by the causes we have named, is increased by his mental debasement. Unprotected, harassed and oppressed, he has been precluded from the genial rays of intellectuality. His mind is veiled in a thick gloom of ignorance."

And the consequence of this condition of the Bengal Ryot, is, to quote the language of the Court of Directors, (3 June, 1852), "there has been a diminution in the total receipts from land in the old provinces of Bengal since 1843-44."

Such are the results of the Zemindary system. Turn next to Madras, where the Ryotwary prevails. There, the India Government does not place the cultivators at the mercy of great speculators in land and farmers of taxes, with power to rack, torment, and sell them off; and render them the slaves of money-lenders. There, it acts the part of landlord directly; annually fixing the rent of the minute portions into which the soil is subdivided; annually collecting these petty sums from its yearly patch-work settlements. And what are the results there? "The Madras men with whom I have talked," writes Mr. Campbell,\* candidly admit that at the present time the state of things is most unsatisfactory—that the people are wretchedly poor, the land of little value; that the difficulty is to get people to cultivate it on any terms, and that the cultivation is kept up by forcing, by government advances, &c. &c.". And what are these, "&c. &c." too common place to name? Cruelties at which humanity shudders; and of which the Madras Petition lately presented to Parliament gives the following example as occurring in the year 1850.

"That at the dittum [the fixation of rent] settlement of the previous year, on their [the Ryots] refusal to accept the dittum offered

\* Modern India.

to them by the Tehsildars of six different talooks, because it included lands that had been relinquished, and others which were not liable to assessment; and because the lands bearing assessment were then re-measured with new ropes, shorter by one cubit than the legal measure; some of them were compelled, *by imprisonment and corporal punishment of various kinds*, to put their names to the dittums; and when others ran away from their talooks to avoid the like treatment, the curnums of the villages forged the names of those who had absconded to the dittums that were assigned to them; they who remained complained to the collector, who said the dittums should not be altered, and refused redress; and when the jumma-bundy came round, on their refusal to pay the excess of the assessment, the houses of the Ryots were stripped of their roofs; their ploughs, ploughing cattle, grain seed, and forage for their grazing cattle, were seized by attachment and sold by auction; some Ryots were arrested as security for the balance still unpaid from the proceeds of the auction; the houses of others were broken into and plundered by the peons, who were paid batta from the proceeds of the sales; their herd cattle were not permitted to graze; and their families prohibited taking water from the tanks and wells for domestic purposes."

Nor is even this all: "The abuses of the whole system," (again we quote from Mr. Campbell,) "and especially that of remissions, is something frightful; the opportunities of extortion, speculation, chicanery, and intrigue of all kinds are unbounded; while the reliance of the Madras collector on informers by no means mends the matter." So bad indeed is the system, he adds, that "if the collector were one of the Prophets, and remained in the same district to the age of Methuselah, he would not be fit for the duty." This is the state of things actually affecting—this the system under which now exist seventeen out of the twenty-two millions of people in the Madras Presidency; contributing nearly four millions sterling to the Government, which thus treats it and them.

In Bombay, where a sort of composite system prevails, things are not much better. "The receipts\* have fallen off, and the country generally speaking is not prosperous." The cost of collection is enormous; not less than 55 per cent.; the surveys are partial and incorrect; settlement there is little or none; while whole classes are exempted, others are squeezed and oppressed to make up, if possible, yearly, falling off receipts.

Mr. Saville Marriott passed nearly half a century in the Civil Service of Bombay, terminating his career in its highest office, that of

\* *Modern India.*



the Council of the Presidency, and, in 1846,\* he thus summed up the fruits of his minute observation and wide experience, in almost every province of Western India :

"In elucidation of the position that this country (India) is verging to the lowest ebb of pauperism, I would adduce a fact pregnant with considerations of the most serious importance ; namely, that of late years a large portion of the public revenue has been paid by encroachment upon the capital of the country, small though that capital is in itself. I allude to the property of the peasantry, which consists of personal ornaments of the precious metals, and jewels, convertible, as occasions require, to profitable purposes and accommodation in agricultural pursuits, most frequently in the shape of pawn till the object has been obtained. I feel certain that an examination would establish that a considerable share of this and other property, even to cattle and household utensils, has been for ever alienated from its proprietors to make good the public revenue. In addition to this lamentable evidence of poverty, is another of equal force, to be seen in all parts of the country, in the numerous individuals of the above class of the community wandering about in search of the employment of hirelings, which they are glad to obtain even for the most scanty pittance. In short, almost everything forces to the conviction that we have before us a narrowing progress to utter pauperism."

Where Rent and Taxation are thus destroying Capital—defined by Political Economy to be the fund for the employment of Labour—well indeed might Mr. Marriott add, when examined before a Parliamentary Committee in 1848, that the condition of the cultivators was "very much depressed, greatly depressed, and I believe declining."

The Bombay Government received a revenue of £500,000 a-year from its Collectorate of Guzerat ; and after an absence of fourteen years, Mr. Giberne returned to it, as Judge, in 1840. Everywhere, he told the Commons' Committee on Cotton Cultivation in 1848, he remarked deterioration, and amongst all classes :

"I did not see so many of the more wealthy classes of the natives. The aristocracy, when we first had the country, used to have their gay carts, horses, and attendants, and a great deal of finery about them ; and there seemed to be an absence of all that. \* \* \* \* The Ryots all complained that they had had money once, but they had none now."

And in a private letter dated 1819, "written by a gentleman high in the Company's Service," and quoted in a pamphlet† published in 1851, the decay of Guzerat is thus described :

\* "*India : The Duty and Interest of England to inquire into its State*," p. 12.

† "*Letters on the Cotton and Roads of Western India*" p. 15.

“Many of the best families in the province, who were rich and well to do when we came into Guzerat, in 1807, have now scarcely clothes to their backs . . . . Our demands in money on the Talookdars are more than three times what they originally paid, without one single advantage gained on their parts. Parties from whom they have been compelled to borrow at ruinous rates of interest enforce their demands by attachment of their lands and villages; thus they sink deeper and deeper in debt, without the chance of extricating themselves. What then must become of their rising families?”

In the North-West, however, things are not so bad. But why? Because, there alone the revenue administration has to some extent followed native footsteps, recognized native rights, and is carried on through the ancient native village system, swept away in Bengal and Madras. But even there, where the assessment does leave to all a profit, so defectively has it been carried out, that some have a very small, if others have a larger one. And already the revenue even there is declining. “If,” wrote the Court of Directors, on the 3rd of June, 1852, “the amount received from the new territory be deducted from the last two years, there will appear a deterioration in the land revenue from the old territory of the North-Western Provinces, as compared with the first average, of £80,000, and in 1849-50, there was no improvement as compared with that average.” All, therefore, is not so bright as it seems even in the North-West; superior as it is to the rest of India.

But it is on India as a whole that attention must be fixed; and how sad the condition of the cultivator is in Bengal, with a population of 40 millions, how far worse it is in Madras with its 22 millions, and how bad it is in Bombay with its 10 millions, the evidence thus briefly produced (to be followed hereafter by detailed examination) will give some general idea of. It is not merely cultivation that is depressed; it is society itself that is being gradually destroyed. The race of native gentry has already almost every where disappeared; and a new danger has arisen—that in another generation or two, the cultivators\* will not be worth having as subjects.

\* It will seem from the following extract of a reply made by Governor Higginson, who knows India well, to an address from the inhabitants of Paley in the Mauritius, that in his opinion, the condition of the natives of India will be “immeasurably” improved by their settling in that island, and their working as negroes in sugar plantations.

“It is very gratifying to me to learn that the measures which have been adopted to secure a more adequate supply of labour here, met with your approval. In

For moral debasement is the inevitable consequence of physical depression. This prospect may be deemed "satisfactory" by the persons responsible for it. But to India it is ruin and destruction; to England it is danger and disgrace.

#### V. LAW AND JUSTICE.

The state of the LAW, the forms of legal procedure, and the ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—these form another test by which to try the legislation of 1833. And these, in the case of that Act, are a special and peculiar test. For Law Reform was not only declared to be one of its most prominent objects; but it contained large and costly provisions to advance that priceless object. "I believe," said Mr. Macaulay, the ministerial orator in passing the Act of 1833, through the House of Commons; "I believe that no country ever stood so much in need of a Code of Laws as India; and I believe that there never was a country in which the want might be so readily supplied." And what Mr. Macaulay so strongly believed to be so needful, and so confidently held to be so easy of execution, he afterwards tried to furnish. For, as member of the Law Commission established under the Act of 1833, he prepared a Code of Criminal Law. That Commission was appointed in 1835, the year after the passing of the Charter Act. The statute is now on the point of expiration. Twenty years have nearly elapsed. But India still awaits the fruits of its labours. The Code prepared by the Commission was first submitted to the Supreme Government in May 1837; it was sent back for revision; it was returned in the October following. It was then sent home to the Court of Directors and the Board of Control; it was next returned to India with Home observations and criticism. Calcutta considered it once more, and sent it back to London; and finally, after eleven years' deliberation, it reached India in 1848. And it has been lying snug and dusty on the shelves of the Council ever since. The Act

the absence of a native population to cultivate our soil, our attention should be directed not only to obtaining a sufficiency of labour for our more immediate wants; but also to the more valuable and permanent benefits to be gained by inducing the natives of India who now come here and carry their earnings back after a few years to settle in the Colony; and from my own experience of both Countries I can affirm that by adopting this as their future home, they will by their own industry, improve their social and physical condition immeasurably beyond what they can ever hope to attain in their own country."

of 1833 has not therefore produced that Code of Laws, "the want of which might be so readily supplied;" instead, it has imposed on India an enormous cost under this head, hitherto without result.

Mr. J. B. Norton of the Madras Bar, in his recently published Pamphlet, *The Administration of Justice in Southern India*, states the Salary alone of the Law Commissioners to have already reached the enormous total of £170,000; but without any advantage whatever to the Natives of India.

"Possibly a considerable amount of useful information has been collected; and certainly sundry very heavy blue books have been brought forth—a proposed Criminal Code proved an abortion, and was strangled at its birth. What few Acts have been produced, are drafted in the loosest and most unlaywerlike fashion, so that almost upon every occasion when they have become the subject of discussion in the Supreme Court, a "coach and horses" have been easily driven through any given section: but, up to the present time no Code, worthy of the name, has been prepared for all India; although it might have been imagined, that to any man wishing to illustrate his name, and hand it down immortal to Posterity, such an object would have been sufficient incentive to his ambition, even if he were not lured by the additional bait of £10,000 per annum, paid monthly, and with the strictest regard to punctuality. But the truth is, the office, from which so much has been expected, has been a mere job. From Mr. Macaulay down to Mr. Bethune, we have never had a lawyer of any practice appointed. Theoretical men, having influence with the Ministry of the day, have been from time to time nominated. They have come out here at a comparatively advanced age, with the world before them where to choose, totally ignorant of the character and habits of the Natives, of their existing Laws and innumerable customs, and consequently unable to form any correct estimate of the wants and exigencies of the country.

"During the few months which Mr. Jackson, the Advocate General of Calcutta, filled the office, he succeeded in pushing through a small but important body of Laws; and we have now unquestionably a ripe and able lawyer of large practice at the helm—but although there can be little doubt that Mr. Peacock's drafts will be workman-like, it remains to be seen whether he will not be overwhelmed with the enormous amount of knowledge which he must necessarily acquire, before he can safely proceed to legislate for a country to which he is a stranger; and whether the habits of the Special Pleader will yield to the more enlarged requirements of the Legislator: but the appointment of a practical lawyer is an instalment of what is due to us; we must take the good the Gods provide us, and be thankful for it.

"But it is not after all, the state of the substantive Law, defective as that is, which is the main subject of just complaint; it is *the miserable system under which it is at present administered*; and the

still more frightful prospect which awaits this unhappy country, if the British Legislature will still turn a deaf ear to our necessities. It is to the awful results of this feeble and insufficient system of judicial administration, the utter inability of the Judges to control the proceedings before them; the unnecessary swelling of the records, the prolongation of trials, and the increased repetition of litigation, which arise from the want of power in the Bench, and are permitted to reign unchecked, that we have all along pointed; for which we emphatically demand a speedy and effectual remedy; certain that if it be not extended to us *now*, we may look in vain for it for the next five and twenty years, unless indeed in the mean time, the evil should have become so intolerable, as to rouse even the unenergetic listless Hindoo to such an extent, as to endanger the continuance of our rule in India."—pp. 127-8-9.

Then, as to the actual state and administration of civil law. In the Regulation Provinces there is nothing worthy of the name of law; but, to a system unworthy that sacred name, are appended cumbersome legal forms and a legal tax. To enter into the courts of what is called justice, it is not only necessary that you should have a plaintiff, but money to pay (not lawyers but) the government. So that to all the Company's subjects who cannot commence the search of justice by paying a tax to the government, the doors of the courts are closed; for them there is neither law nor justice. And having money, what, when admitted, do they find? Judges, as Mr. Campbell confesses, a scandal to the British name.

"When a Collector is old enough, he is made a Judge. It seems to be considered that if, at this time of life a man is fit for anything, he is fit for a Judge; and if he is fit for nothing, better make him a Judge and get rid of him. The judicial department being in a less satisfactory state than any other, is less sought after, and, the ill effects of mismanagement being less immediately startling, the principle that, in a choice of evils, any man will do for a Judge seems to have become established. Some who mismanage their districts are said to be promoted to be Judges against their will."

Judicial proceedings are rendered intricate by the multiplication of technical forms, by the rigid exaction of nice, obscure, puzzling, pedantic, and expensive rites and ceremonies; in short, intricacy and obscurity are intentionally created. The courts indeed profess to give every man the law of his own religion or country, or where the litigants are of different tribes, according to the custom of the country or the law of the defendant. But on this variegated basis a large and complicated legal system of constructions, undigested and unarranged, has been reared, and it is left to the administration of men not

educated as lawyers; but laymen, who, grasping at the shadow, lose the substance of justice; who have no equitable jurisdiction to mitigate the harshness of legal forms; who scarcely speak or understand the language of the country, and who, consequently, are quite unable to discriminate as to the value of testimony. The result is—petty suits, and the plaints of the poor and helpless repelled by expense; opening for fraud, perjury and forgery; a number of appeals such as no other country on the face of the world can furnish; a complete revolution of the rights and institutions of the country; and, adds Mr. Campbell, “a lamentable demoralization of the people.”

For fifteen years has the criminal law, as administered by the Company's courts, been condemned by Government itself. It is just as fit for the Christian people of this realm as for the Hindoo subjects of the Queen in India. Its foundations are Mahomedan; and, though in the case of Hindoos the opinion of the Mahomedan assessor attached to the court, may be dispensed with, the effect is not to introduce a better system of law, but to place the criminal at the mercy of the judge's discretion without any law at all: the judge being, as a general rule, quite incompetent to exercise any discretion, and wholly innocent of a knowledge of any law, Christian, Mahomedan, or Hindoo.

## VI. POLICE.

If there be little or no criminal law, there is, however, a POLICE. But it has, we quote the declaration of 1252 British and other Christian Inhabitants of Calcutta and Lower Bengal in their Petition to the House of Commons, “not only failed to effect the prevention of crime, the apprehension of offenders, and the protection of life and property; but it has become the engine of oppression and a great cause of the corruption of the people.” In a population of forty millions scattered over an area larger than France, there are ten thousand police; and of the practical bearing of the system on the condition of the people, the Petitioners give the following illustration:—

“That in case of the apprehension of an offender, and in order to prosecute him, it is necessary for the injured party and his witnesses to go before the magistrate, but this may be a journey of from fifteen or less, to fifty miles or more, in consequence of the extent of this district, and when arrived at the magistrate's office, he may be detained days or weeks from a variety of causes: that in

fact a magistrate's compound in the Lower Provinces often presents the spectacle of hundreds of persons thus kept in detention for weeks; and if the offence is of a grave character, or beyond the jurisdiction of a magistrate, he and his witnesses may be required to take a second journey of the same distance to the sessions, and be there detained days or weeks waiting for a trial. At the sessions also, hundreds of persons are constantly detained at great distances from their homes. That to avoid these inconveniences, the population render little or no aid to the police for the enforcement of the law, but on the contrary they are generally averse to do so, and hence has arisen a practice which is a great reproach to the police system, namely, that witnesses generally and prosecutors often are made prisoners, kept under arrest, and sent to the magistrate, and afterwards to the sessions in actual custody. That from this state of the law and police result the following among other evils; persons robbed deny the fact of a robbery, or if they complain, the persons who could be witnesses deny all knowledge of it. the immediate interests of these classes being arrayed by reason of the state of the law and jurisdiction against, the objects of law and justice. Often under these circumstances the native policeman to do his duty employs the means of terror, and torture is believed to be extensively practised on persons under accusation, and the injured party for not assisting him becomes an offender. All the evil passions are thus brought into play, and ingenuities of all kinds, both by people and police, are resorted to. Another result is the constant device of proving a true case by witnesses who knew nothing about the matter; justice is supposed thus to be satisfied, but convenient perjury becomes familiar, and perjury loses its criminal character among the people. Thus, and in a thousand other ways, the law and police operate to corrupt the people and spread corruption; moreover the very circumstances which repel the honest, attract those who have revenge to gratify, rivals to injure, enemies to destroy; and for these and other dishonest purposes the police and criminal courts are resorted to, and police and law under the present system are terrible evils.

"That a further aggravation of evil results from some powers possessed by the native police, which practically are magisterial, such as the power of receiving confessions, and in all cases of taking (though not on oath) the deposition of witnesses, which powers are exercised by the serjeant (Jemadar) in the absence of his immediate superior (the Darogah), and thereby practically the course of criminal justice takes its direction from them, and thus the police control the magistrate's functions, instead of his superintending and controlling the police."

In Madras (perhaps fortunately) no attempt has been made at a regular police; but, though the extortions and cruelties suffered in Bengal from its police are unknown in Madras, great and serious crimes, particularly gang robberies, flourish in that Province.

Bombay the police, much the same as in Madras, is reported by the authorities to be in a state of "comparative torpor;" and in consequence violent crimes are very prevalent. In one Presidency there is, we see, a police more oppressive to the people than the criminals; in the other two Presidencies there is so little police, that there is an excessive amount of the most heinous offences. Tried then by the tests of law, justice, and crime, the Legislation of 1833 has not resulted in "the improvement and happiness of the natives of India."

#### VII. EDUCATION.

Measure the system of 1833 by the wand of EDUCATION, short as we may choose to make it, and the result is worse still. So paltry an item of expenditure is Native Education, that it does not even constitute an item in the yearly Finance Accounts laid before Parliament. It is, therefore, impossible to say what per centage of a net revenue of twenty-one millions sterling, is spent on this means of promoting the improvement and happiness of the Natives. But this is well known, that, whereas in Hindoo times every village community had its school, our destruction of village societies or municipalities has deprived the Natives of their schools, such as they were, and has substituted nothing in their stead; except perhaps in the North Western Provinces. For the ten millions of people in the Bombay Presidency, there is a grant of £12,500 a-year for their education. In the town of Madras there is a Collegiate Institution languishing on £3000 a-year. This absorbs one half of the educational allowance for that Presidency, containing a population of twenty-two millions. The other half has never been laid out; and "there is not," say the people of Madras, in their Petition to Parliament, "a Government school over all the 140,000 square miles, comprising the Madras territories." In short, out of these 22 millions of people the Indian Government yearly educates 160! And when in Bengal the richer natives do send their sons to England for education, the young men, returning competent for, are refused Government employment on the same terms and on the same rank as Europeans. Within the last five years a Hindoo young gentleman carried off several medical prizes at University College, and received the diploma of M.D. The Court of Directors, and individual



mission as Surgeon in a Native Regiment, but the request was refused. And by gentlemen, too, who, it stands in evidence, have at home spent out of Indian Taxation during the last twenty years, the enormous sum of £53,000 in public banquets and more select house dinners. It is not by such educational expenditure, or by such treatment when native gentlemen do educate themselves, that "the improvement and happiness of the natives of India" can be promoted.

#### VIII. PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OF THE NATIVES.

And the insufficiency of this Test of Education naturally brings us to another, viz. the EMPLOYMENT OF NATIVES. In our earlier Indian career, Natives were employed in the most important and confidential posts of our Government. Our regiments were officered by Natives; in many places we had Native agents and representatives; everywhere we were then obliged to make use of native talent. But in those days Indian patronage was not valuable, and Indian salaries were at least moderate. But, gradually this use of native ability was displaced, and every post of profit, of trust, of value transferred, at enormous addition to the cost of Government—to Englishmen; until at last it became part and parcel of our established policy. The legislation of 1833, however, attempted to remedy this monstrous injustice, by enacting that none should be excluded from any office by reason of religion, place of birth, descent, or colour. But so far from the enactment having remedied the wrong, "this provision," was according to Mr. Campbell, "a mere flourish of trumpets and of no practical effect whatever as far as the natives are concerned." Indeed, according to him, it has been prejudicial rather than advantageous to native employment; "for," he adds, "the only effect has been to open to Europeans offices originally intended for natives."

The division between the Covenanted and Uncovenanted services is still kept up; though the covenant itself is absurd and ridiculous, now that the East India Company has nothing to do with trade. And the purpose for which it is maintained is to draw an artificial line by means of which the Natives may continue, however educated, able, and competent, to be excluded from all high and lucrative employment. The Act of 1833 declares that religion, birth, and colour shall not exclude any man from any office. But the Government of India refuses

its covenanted service. Thus, it defeats by a rule of its own, the provision of the legislature of 1833, which particularly aimed at promoting "the improvement and happiness" of the natives of India, by employing them in the public service; and by their employment, reducing the cost of Government. Some few thousands—3000 or 4000 out of 150,000 millions—do indeed get small posts, worth on an average some £30 a year. But any real share in Government administration, trust, and responsibility, is denied the people of India. Yet, in Lord Grey's work on the *Colonial Administration of Lord John Russell's Government*,\* he is found boasting, how, on the Gold Coast of Africa, the Governor summoned its chiefs into council; and how, out of "this rude Negro Parliament," England is there creating an African nation.

"I am persuaded I do not overrate the importance of the establishment of this rude Negro Parliament, when I say that I believe it has converted a number of barbarous tribes, possessing nothing that deserves the name of a Government, into a Nation, with a regularly organised authority and institutions, simple and unpretending, but suited to the actual state of society, and containing within themselves all that is necessary for their future development; so that they may meet the growing wants of an advancing civilisation."

But in India, a people "learned in all the arts of polished life, when we were yet in the woods,"† less favoured than the Fantees of Cape Coast Castle, are proscribed as a race of incompetent, helpless incapables, and condemned to everlasting inferiority in lands which their forefathers made famous.

#### IX. POPULAR CONTENTMENT.

Are then the people of India content with the working of the legislation of 1833? It would be strange if they were; and they are not. They do not rebel; they do not resist; they do not rise against the Indian Government; as do the Natives in

\* Vol. ii. p. 258-6.

† "This multitude of men does not consist of an abject and barbarous populace; much less of gangs of savages like the Guaranies and the Chiquitos, who wander on the waste borders of the Amazon or the Plate; but a people for ages civilised; cultivated in all the arts of polished life when we were yet in the woods. There are to be found chiefs of tribes and nations—an ancient and venerable priesthood, the depositories of their laws, learning and history; a nobility of great antiquity and renown; a multitude of cities; merchants and bankers, individuals of whom once vied with the Bank of England, whose credit often supported a tottering state; millions of ingenious manufacturers and mechanics; millions of the most diligent, and not least intelligent tillers of the earth"—*Buckle on Civilisation*.

adjoining States still governed by their own Princes. For, under British rule the power of the Government is too strong and well organised for a successful resort to these violent modes of manifesting public opinion. But now that the opportunity has arisen—now that there is a chance of improvement, they petition Parliament. And what say their petitions? That they are happy and prosperous? That they are satisfied with the results of the Act of 1833? That they regard its renewal with contentment and hope? Nothing of the sort. The very reverse. Listen to the language that comes from Madras :—

“That the grievances of your Petitioners arise principally from the excessive taxation, and the vexations which accompany its collection; and the insufficiency, delay, and expense of the Company's courts of law; and their chief wants are, the construction of roads, bridges, and works for the supply of irrigation; and a better provision for the education of the people. They also desire a reduction of the public expenditure, and a form of local government more generally conducive to the happiness of the subject and the prosperity of the country; and to these main points your Petitioners beg the consideration of your honourable House, respectfully applying in behalf of themselves and their countrymen for those remedies and reforms which, in the wisdom of your honourable House, may be deemed expedient and practicable.”

The people of Madras complain that the whole framework of society has been overthrown to their injury, and almost to their ruin.

“That notwithstanding this decided testimony to the superiority of the village system as regards the prosperity both of the revenue and the cultivator, the Court of Directors ordered the village system to be superseded by the Ryotwar, as before stated by your Petitioners; and, with a professed view to remedy the evils attending it, issued orders which declared that the labour of the Ryot should be henceforward free from compulsion; that private property in lands on this side of the Peninsula should be acknowledged, and that the over-assessment should be reduced; but, however well intentioned those orders may have been, Ryotwar is still the curse of the country, the over-assessment continues unaltered, the Ryots are compelled to cultivate at the pleasure of the Tehsildar, and the acknowledged right of private property in no way prevents the oppression of the owner, nor his gradual and sure pauperization. That while your Petitioners apply to your honourable House for a return of their old revenue system on the broad ground of justice to the cultivators, they beg to point out a few particulars in which the change will be advantageous to the Government :—1. It will be relieved from the loss and corruption entailed by the Ryotwar system; 2. It is secured from all loss arising from unequal land tax; 3. The rent will not depend upon

the correct assessment of the cultivation ; and, 4. The charge of collection will be considerably decreased ; yet even were there no immediate advantage likely to accrue to the Government, your Petitioners would represent that a lighter and more reasonable assessment, coupled with the removal of the vexations and oppressions accompanying the present mode of collection, would ensure a much larger cultivation and thereby the revenues of the State would be improved ; and that the people of India are therefore entitled to seek and to obtain from the paramount authority of the Imperial Parliament the necessary and equitable redress of the weighty and multiform grievances brought upon them by the introduction of the system under which they groan ; and their claims to the mode of redress they have pointed out are rendered still stronger by the fact, that a settlement by villages nearly resembling that which your Petitioners seek for themselves is actually now in full operation in the north-western provinces under the Bengal Presidency, where the leases are held on a term of thirty years duration."

They complain that salt, the only condiment for their tasteless rice, and without which neither they nor their cattle can live, is a Government monopoly.

They complain that not only are they taxed for their shops in towns, and for stalls and sheds on road-sides ; but for each tool and implement, of their trades ; nay, for their very knives, "*the cost of which*," they tell Parliament, "*is frequently exceeded six times over by the Moturpha [Tax] under which the use of them is permitted.*"

They complain that in order to raise revenue from ardent spirits, the Government is forcing drunkenness on them ; "a vice," they add, "forbidden by Hindoo and Mahomedan law."

They complain, that spread over 140,000 square miles in the Madras Presidency are only 130 post-offices ; that throughout that extent of country there are scarcely 3000 miles of roads practicable for bullock carts ; that these roads are mostly without bridges, impracticable in wet weather, and tedious and dangerous in the dry season. They complain of the state of the Law, of the Police, and of almost every department of administration which can contribute to good government ; and they earnestly entreat to be heard personally, on their complaints, before Parliament.

So, also, the Bombay Petitioners. They express their belief 'that it will be found easy by your honourable House to devise a constitution for India which, while it shall contain all the good elements of the existing system, shall be less cumbersome, less exclusive, less secret, more directly responsible, and infinitely more efficient and more acceptable to the governed'

They object to the cost of the present system :—

“ Your Petitioners submit that the cost of administration in India is unnecessarily great, and considerable reductions might be made, without the slightest detriment or injury to any one save the patrons or expectants of office, by abolishing sinecure offices, and retrenching the exorbitant salaries of many highly-paid officers, whose duties are so trifling, or involve comparatively so little labour or responsibility, that they might with advantage be amalgamated with other offices, or remunerated in a manner commensurate with the nature of the duties to be performed.”

They claim a greater share of employment for the people of India in the conduct of their own affairs :

“ Your Petitioners respectfully submit that the time has arrived when the natives of India are entitled to a much larger share than they have hitherto had in the administration of the affairs of their country, and that the councils of the local governments should, in matters of general policy and legislation be opened, so as to admit of respectable and intelligent natives taking a part in the discussion of matters of general interest to the country, as suggested by Lords Ellenborough, Elphinstone, and others.”

Equally strong and decisive is the Bengal Petition:—

“ It might appear paradoxical to deny its prosperity in the face of the vast increase which has taken place in the foreign commerce ; but it is undeniable that, contemporaneously with this increase, crimes of a violent character have increased, and law and police are also regarded as affording little security either for rights of persons or property. Hence the limited application of British capital to agriculture and mines, and the limited employment of British skill in India (the former being confined to a few valuable articles, such as indigo, for the cultivation of which the soil and climate are so superior as to afford the profits almost of a monopoly, silk, and a few others), and hence also small capitals can rarely be employed in India. The planter or capitalist in the interior never or rarely leaves his capital when he himself quits the country in consequence of its insecurity, and from this cause results the high rate of interest of money. Landholders pay twenty-five and thirty per cent., and the ryot or cultivator is in a worse relation than of servitude to the money-lender. Your Petitioners therefore think that inquiry ought to be instituted by Parliament into the state of the country, in order to provide some probable remedy for the evils adverted to.”

If contentment, therefore, be a test of good government, the Act of 1833 has signally failed.

#### X. HOME CONTROL.

Another test yet remains. The Act of 1833 was proposed as a substitute for a Constitution. If we cannot, it was then argued by

Mr. Macaulay, on behalf of Lord Grey's Government, safely entrust the people of India with popular rights and privileges, we will at least have a constituency at home bound by their own interests to watch over and protect them ; a constituency which, to use his exact words, "*shall feel any disorder in the finances of India in the disorder of their own household affairs.*" Has this anticipation been realized—has this intention been fulfilled ? No ; disorders there have been for fifteen years in the finances of India ; but those disorders have not been felt in the "household affairs" of the proprietors of East India stock. Despite Indian deficits, English dividends of ten and a half per cent have been regularly maintained and "well and truly paid." And thus India has lost that English security for good government which Mr. Macaulay announced it was a design of the Act of 1833 to establish.

But it is unnecessary, in this general summary, to pursue the enquiry further. Enough has been sketched, though in outline only, to make rational, benevolent, and patriotic men hesitate when asked to consent to a renewal of the Act of 1833 ; enough has been stated, to make them doubt whether the present system of government is even capable of improvement ; enough, we believe, to convince all impartial men that a new plan of Indian administration must be cast.



# INDIA · REFORM.

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*Asiatic Annual Registers.*

*Reports of Select Committees of the House of Commons, on affairs  
of the East India Company, 1810—1832—1852.*

*Campbell's Modern India.*

*India, by John Dickinson, Jun.*

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THE historian Mill is rebuked by his commentator for having said that India is beneficial to England only if it "affords a surplus revenue which can be sent to England. If the revenue of India is not equal to the expense of governing India, then is India a burthen and a drain upon England." Who, says Dr. Wilson,\* will venture to "maintain a proposition so contrary to the fact? Regarding our connexion with India, even only in the paltry consideration of how much money we have made by it, the assertion that we have profited solely by its surplus revenue; that is, that in five years out of six we have realized no profit at all, is palpably false. In every year of our intercourse with India, even in those in which the public revenue has fallen far short of the expenditure, there has been a large accession to English capital, brought home from India. What are the profits of Indian trade? What is the maintenance of 30,000 Englishmen, military included? What is the amount of money annually remitted to England for the support of relations, the education of children, the pensions of officers, and finally, what can we call the fortunes accumulated by individuals in trade, or in the service of the Company, which they survive to spend in England, or bequeath to their descendants? What is all this but additional capital remitted from India to England; additional, largely additional, means of recompensing British Industry. It is idle, then, to talk of a surplus revenue being the sole source of the benefits derivable from India. On the contrary, it is, and it ought to be, the least even of our pecuniary advantages, for its transfer to England is an abstraction of Indian capital, for which no equivalent is given; it is an exhausting drain upon the resources of the country, the issue of which is replaced by no reflux; it is an extraction of the life blood from the veins of

\* Mills' History of India. by J. Wilson. vol. vi. p. 471

national industry, which no subsequent introduction of nourishment is furnished to restore."

All this is unquestionably true, and in this very truth lies our danger. India may be indirectly pouring treasures into the lap of England, may be enriching individuals, whilst its finances are in a state of exhaustion. The "fortunes accumulated by individuals" if thrown again into the public treasury, in the shape of loans bearing interest, may arrest the progress of decay for a time, but it is obvious, that the application of such a remedy, if long continued, must, in the end, make the disease mortal. **4720**

Is the revenue of India then equal at this moment, to the expense of governing India? Has it ever been equal to that charge?

These are questions of vital importance, not only to India, but to England; for the interests of the two countries are now so closely linked, that the credit of the one cannot be affected—as Sir R. Peel informed us in 1842,\* when proposing the Income Tax—without a serious reaction upon the other. To the solution of these questions we shall therefore apply ourselves, taking for our guides the official documents which have from time to time been laid before Parliament.

The most sanguine expectations of the great financial results which were to follow, from territorial acquisitions in India, appear to have been entertained from the very commencement of our rule. Clive, when he had come to the determination of demanding a grant of the Dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, from the King of Delhi, instructed his agent in England to invest all the money that could be raised, in India stock, upon the strength of the high dividends which were to accrue to the East India Company, from these possessions. He described Bengal as a country of "inexhaustible riches." "The East India Company," he said,† "shall be the richest Company in the world; they have now a territory which will give them an income of more than two millions sterling;—their civil and military expenditure shall never exceed £700,000 in time of peace, or £1,000,000 in time of war." Nor in saying this did Clive speak unadvisedly.

\* "Depend upon it, if the credit of India should become disordered, if some great exertion should become necessary, then the credit of England must be brought forward to its support, and the collateral and indirect effect of disorders in Indian finances would be felt extensively in this country."—*Sir Robert Peel's Speech on the Budget, 1842.*

He found himself in a country possessing a soil of unexampled fertility, in the highest state of cultivation, teeming with an industrious population, a section of which then possessed unrivalled manufacturing skill, with a busy traffic carried upon a magnificent river, and with the public Treasury full to overflowing. Moreover, he knew that during the whole period of the Moghul Government, Bengal had contributed a clear million sterling per annum to the imperial treasury.

But Clive had soon proof of a melancholy fact, which vitiated his financial calculations, and has vitiated all similar calculations, viz. that in India our charges grew faster than our receipts. In four years from the date of his promise—that Bengal would yield a surplus income of a million sterling—the Government there reported an empty treasury, and their total inability to meet the demands against it. They spoke, at the same time, in pathetic terms, of “the incontestable evidence they had furnished to their honourable masters of the exaggerated light in which their newly acquired advantages had been placed.” At the end of another four years, viz. in 1773, the Company was obliged to apply to Parliament for a loan of £1,400,000; and in the year 1780, the Government of Warren Hastings complained that the revenue of India was utterly inadequate to meet the expenditure, and that no resource remained but to borrow to the utmost extent of their credit.

From 1765 to 1784, we had several exhausting wars, but no extension of consequence to our territory. In 1790, we had war with Tippoo, which ended in the cession to us of half of his territory, and in a pecuniary mulct of upwards of three millions sterling. In 1792-3, there was a surplus of revenue over expenditure in India of upwards of a million sterling; and in that year we find the Minister for India\* basing a magnificent financial scheme upon the assumption that this surplus was to be permanent; £500,000 a year was to be appropriated towards the liquidation of the Indian debt; an equal sum was to be paid into the British Exchequer; and the remainder to be divided amongst the proprietors of India Stock. But at the very moment that the Minister was thus dealing with a local surplus, the Directors were, with his consent, raising a loan of two millions under the name of additional capital, in order to keep their treasury afloat at home. In

the three following years—although they were years of peace—the surplus gradually declined; and in the fourth year, viz. in 1797-8, it was converted into a deficit. In that, and in the following year, the Indian Government was obliged to raise more than three millions\* by way of loan, and when Lord Wellesley entered into the war with Tippoo in 1799, he with difficulty obtained money to carry on the public service at 10 and 12 per cent interest. Nothing daunted by the conversion of an imaginary surplus into a heavy deficit, or by the annihilation of his financial fabric, the Minister renewed his predictions of a triumphant result.

“It is satisfactory to reflect,” he said, “that in India, the only inconvenience produced by the war has been upon the treasuries to a certain degree; but this effect it may be presumed will not be permanent. New sources of wealth have been opened, from which there is every reason to hope a full compensation will eventually be derived for the pecuniary sacrifices that have been made.”†

The result of the war of 1799 was to give us possession of another large slice of Tippoo's territory. In 1800 we acquired territory from the Nizam valued at £600,000 a year, in commutation of a subsidy of £400,000. In 1801 we took from the Nabob of Oude territory estimated to yield £1,300,000, in lieu of a subsidy of £760,000. In 1802 we took all the territory of the Nabob of Arcot, all the territory of the Rajah of Tanjore, the petty principalities of Furruckabad and Tanjore, and in the same year the Peishwah ceded to us a territory in Guzerat of the annual value of upwards of £200,000.

These great territorial acquisitions produced their usual result, viz. a conviction that henceforth we were to revel in riches, and in reviewing the state of the finances in 1803 we find the Indian Minister again employed in the pleasing task of apportioning an imaginary surplus of a million and a half sterling.‡ This bright prospect, indeed, he said, would depend “altogether on peace.” Nevertheless, “I venture to express it as my firm conviction that with our prospects in respect of revenue the Indian surplus would more than cover the extraordinaries of a war expenditure. I see no reason why any

* Increase of debt—1798 . . .	£1,557,174
1799 . . .	1,062,881

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£3,520,055

† Mr. Dundas's speech on the Indian Budget, 12th March, 1799.

‡ Lord Castlereagh's speech on Indian Budget, 14th March. 1803.

fresh loan should be contracted abroad, but, on the contrary, I conceive a sinking fund to the extent of one million may be annually applied to the discharge of the Indian debt—not that the debt, he said, was a real incumbrance—there were advantages, in many points of view in having a permanent debt in India in some degree proportionate to its present extent.” This was said in March; in June intelligence was received of the breaking out of the Mahratta war. The confidence of the Minister, however, in his estimates remained unabated. “I trust I shall satisfactorily prove,” he said, “that no very material disappointment is to be feared in the year to which these estimates apply, and that as to future years the stability of the power and the resources of the British empire in the East is now such that unless events should occur against which no human foresight can provide, the only serious inconvenience to be apprehended is the procrastination of the liquidation of the Indian debt.”

It was shrewdly remarked during the debate, that “all that related to the past, in the Minister’s speech—all that was certain—was dark and gloomy; all that concerned the future—all that was uncertain—was fair and brilliant.” At the very moment that the Minister for India was propounding a plan for the liquidation of debt out of an imaginary surplus, and assuring the House of Commons that we should get through the war without incurring fresh debt, the Governor-General, Lord Wellesley, was borrowing all the money that he could get at eight per cent interest, to make up a heavy deficit and to provide for the war. But even these favourable terms failed to fill the treasury; this very loan was at a heavy discount, the establishments in arrears, and the credit of the Government so low, that unless the chief mercantile houses at Bombay, at the instance of the late Sir Charles Forbes, had come forward to prop it, the operations of the great Duke—then General Wellesley—would have been paralyzed. He tells us, indeed, that he was on one occasion compelled to levy a contribution on one of the enemy’s towns in order to find means for paying his troops.\*

When Lord Wellesley entered upon his administration in 1798, the charges in India exceeded the revenue by the sum of £118,746; when he quitted it in 1805, there was a surplus charge of £2,268,608; and whilst the revenues, from large territorial acquisitions, had increased from upwards of eight, to upwards of fifteen millions, per annum, the debt had increased from seventeen to thirty-

one millions and a half. He resigned his trust, however, with confident predictions of enduring peace, and of financial prosperity, and strange to say, we find his cautious brother, then Sir Arthur Wellesley, lending himself to the delusion, that augmented territory would inevitably bring with it augmented wealth; after an elaborate examination of Indian finance in 1806, we find him expressing his conviction that "the revenues of that great empire would be found to afford ample means of restoring the finances, and that there would be in that year, the first of peace, a surplus, after providing for every demand, of upwards of £700,000."\* The minister chimed in with this sanguine note; there was already a surplus, he said, of £800,000, and by necessary attention to the expenditure, he had no doubt it would produce such a surplus as would be sufficient for a speedy liquidation of their debts; and this was said in support of a Bill, then before the House, to authorize the Company to borrow two millions in England upon bond; and with a letter from the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, before him, in which he stated that "an inquiry into the state of the finances of India afforded the most discouraging prospect, that unless some speedy measures were taken to reduce the expenditure, to meet with effect the contingency of war, the consequences would be serious; that the regular troops were little short of five months, and many other departments still more in arrear."

In the next year (1808) we have the same minister moving for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the causes of the "*considerable deficit* in the territorial revenues of India, and, to investigate the nature and extent of that deficit."† In 1811 the Company again came to the Parliament for the loan of a million and a half, and when they applied for assistance to a like amount, for the third time, in 1812, they expressed their grievous disappointment, that there should have been an excess of charge over revenue in India, even in the third year of peace, of upwards of a million sterling. This first chapter in the financial history of India ends with the year 1813, when the affairs of that empire again came under the consideration of Parliament. From 1765 to 1814, the East India Company had a common treasury for territory and commerce, so that it was impossible to ascertain exactly how the accounts stood

\* Speech on India Budget, July 8, 1806. Do. of Mr. R. Dundas, July 30, 1807.

Speech of Mr. R. Dundas on India Budget. March 11 1808.

between the two branches, whether commerce had derived aid from the territorial revenue, or whether the revenue had been assisted by the profits of trade. By the Act of 1813, they were required to keep separate accounts of the two concerns, so that from that year a new financial era commences.

With the exception of a few months war with the Rajah of Travancore, and a demonstration against Ameer Khan, India had enjoyed profound peace from 1806 to 1813. We have seen the Directors complaining that the charges in India greatly exceeded the Revenue in the third year of peace. Most rigorous efforts were made in subsequent years to keep down the expenditure; the interest of the debt was reduced from eight to six per cent; there was, nevertheless, an annual deficiency in the last five years of peace, which amounted on the average to £134,662.\*

Lord Hastings assumed charge of the Government of India, in October, 1813, and thus describes the state in which he found the finances:—

“The treasuries of the three Presidencies were in so impoverished a condition, that the insufficiency of funds in them to meet any unusual charges excited considerable uneasiness. At that period the low credit of the bonds which had at different times been issued as the securities for monies borrowed, made eventual recourse to a loan seriously discouraging in contemplation. As twelve per cent discount on the above securities was the regularly computable rate in the market—when no immediate exigency pressed upon us, the grievous terms to which we must have subscribed for a new supply of that nature in an hour of alarm, could not be disguised by any foresight.”†

A local surplus of revenue over the charges—he says—had been obtained, by a false economy, and it had no permanence. In order to find the necessary means for carrying on the war with Nepaul, in which he was almost immediately engaged, he put his hands into the pockets of our ally and friend the Nabob of Oude, and drew from thence two millions and a half sterling.

Large acquisitions of territory were the results of this war, and of the war in which we were subsequently engaged with the Mahrattas. And Lord Hastings, after summing up all the events of his trium-

\* Report of Select Committee, August 1832, p. 42.

† Lord Hastings' summary of his administration, appendix to Report of Select Committee, August 1832.



phant government, thus expresses himself on the financial prospect in India :

"After revolving every circumstance with the coolest caution, I cannot find any reason why subsequently to the year 1823, an annual surplus of not less than four millions should not be confidently reckoned upon. This ought naturally to increase, for the causes which will augment the receipt, have nothing in their tendency to require further charges."

The "causes," however, which were to blight this fair prospect were then "looming in the distance," and in less than two years, instead of a surplus of four millions, we were involved in the most pinching financial difficulties, the consequence of the first Burmese war, difficulties which obliged us again to have recourse to our native allies. Amongst the first who felt our friendly embrace, was the unfortunate King of Oude, from whose coffers we extracted another million and a half, upon loan at five per cent, the interest in his own country being twelve—abusing him at the same time for his mismanagement, whilst depriving him of the only means by which he could have reformed it. Scindiah, the Raja of Nagpore, the Raja of Putteala, and even our prisoner, the ex-Peishwah Bajee Rao, contributing to our necessities, and from these friends in need we drew a supply of about £800,000.\* The Burmese war ended in 1826, with the cession to us of Tannaserim and Arracan, and an increase to the public debt to the amount of thirteen millions, and in 1832, the six intervening years having been years of peace, the affairs of India again came under the consideration of Parliament.

We have seen a succession of Indian ministers expressing from year to year, during almost a whole period of the Company's Charter from 1793 to 1813, their confidence that the Indian Revenue would be found equal to all emergencies; that although in time of war, the English Exchequer might be obliged to forego its claim to participate in the Indian surplus; yet that the ways and means would be equal to the demands of a war expenditure, that some progress might even be made in reducing the debt, and we have seen that period wind up with an increase of debt to the extent of twenty millions!

These results had taught ministers prudence, and there was ab-

\* When Runjeet Sing heard of the demand on the Raja of Putteala for money on loan, he laughed, and asked "If this was the gratuitous protection that he

solute silence in Parliament upon the subject of Indian finance during the whole time of the next Charter, viz., from 1813 to 1833. In that interim great acquisitions of territory had been made, and it wound up with a further increase to the public debt of upwards of 17 millions.

With the Act of 1833, another financial era commenced. India which, during the preceding twenty years, had been largely helped from the Company's commercial treasury, was thrown entirely upon its own resources, with an additional demand upon them of upwards of £600,000 for dividends to proprietors of India Stock; and strange to say, it was under these discouraging circumstances that the Indian Minister ventured to revive the note of financial triumph:

“With respect to the competency of India to answer all the just demands upon its Exchequer, no reasonable doubt can exist (said Mr. Grant.) A steady, progressive revenue, a territory almost unlimited in extent, a rich soil, and an industrious people, ‘are sufficient pledges that our treasury in the East will, under wise management, be more than adequate to meet the current expenditure.’ Our political position in that quarter has been improved, and our Empire been consolidated during the continuance of the present Charter; it is, I think, no extravagant conjecture that the financial condition of our Indian dominions will gradually advance.” \*

In the twenty years that have elapsed since this opinion was given we have had another vast augmentation of territory, with its usual accompaniment, an enormous increase of debt. Nothing daunted, however, by these results, we find the Indian Minister, in the face of an hourly increasing debt, and of an actual deficit of nearly a million sterling, only in the last session of Parliament, whilst admitting that the average annual excess of charge over revenue within the last twenty years had been upwards of a million, and that the debt had increased twenty-two millions within the same period, actually congratulating himself and the House upon the financial prospects of India. “True it is,” he said, “that we have had some enormously expensive wars; but then see, on the other hand, how expansive the revenues have been.” “There cannot be a doubt,” said Mr. Herries, “that India will be able to fulfil my expectations that may be formed of her. We are now at peace, and may well expect that the future resources of India will have an opportunity of developing themselves undisturbed by the miseries of war.” At the moment

that this sentence was falling from the lips of the Right Honourable gentleman, we opened our batteries against Rangoon, and thus began the first act of a second Burmese war. We shall probably finish it with the usual results, viz., the annexation of territory that will not pay, an increase of some millions to our debt, and by sowing the seeds of another war.

It has been shrewdly observed that "our Indian prosperity is always in the future tense. We are to be reimbursed and enriched some day or other by the territorial acquisitions made in time of war, and in the mean time we are increasing our debt at the rate of two millions a-year."

The public debt of India, bearing interest, as it stood before we commenced our career of conquest and annexation, was—

In 1792 ..... £7,129,934

After commencing that career, it stood as follows :

In 1814 ..... 26,970,786

In 1829 ..... 39,377,880

In 1850 ..... 50,847,561

To which last mentioned sum must be added five millions supplied from the commercial treasury of the Company, in aid of the India finances during the currency of the Charter, which ended in 1834.

The average annual deficiency in the last five years of the

Charter—*years of peace*—which terminated in 1814,

was ..... £134,662

In the next five years, principally war, which ended in

1818-19 ..... 736,853

In the five years of peace, which ended in 1823-4 ..... 27,531

In the five years ending in 1828-29—three of war ..... 2,878,031

In the ten years ending 1849-50 ..... 1,474,195

Our questions seem to be answered by these figures—they prove that the Revenue of India, in our hands, has never been equal to the expense of its government. They prove, moreover, that the whole financial history of India has been a history of delusions; arising out of a notion that territory would be as profitable to us foreigners as it undoubtedly was to its native owners. Under this impression we

made ourselves masters, not only of all India, but of much beyond India; and we are now in a fair way of carrying our dominions to the frontier of China.

Every step was to be the last, and every war was wound up with confident predictions of peace, and financial prosperity, and we are at this moment in the "future tense." The estimated deficiency for the past year, 1851-2, was 78,84,678 rupees—upwards of £780,000—in the second year of peace; and we are now again in the midst of a war expenditure, the full result of which will only be known some years hence.

It is only justice to the Court of Directors to say, that up to a very late period they had not lent themselves to the delusion that the Revenue of India was equal to the charge of its government; for while Mr. Grant, at the expiration of the last Charter, was expressing himself with confidence as to the competency of the Indian revenue, to answer all demands that might be made upon it; the Directors were preparing prospective estimates, by which they calculated that if the benefit, which the finances of India had derived from the commercial treasury of the Company was to be continued, there would still be an annual deficiency of £453,823, and if deprived of that aid, of £813,209. Strange to say, in correcting this estimate, the same minister admitted that there would be either a deficiency of £123,253, or of £560,924,\* and we have seen that the actual deficiency has considerably exceeded that amount.

That wars have been the main cause of our financial disappointments there can be no doubt; nevertheless, our predecessors, the Moghul Emperors, had many more wars than we have had, and were yet in financial prosperity. The century from the accession of Acbar in 1566 to the deposal of Shah Jehan, 1668, was a period of almost uninterrupted wars. The military establishments of the Moghuls were larger than ours; their expenditure was enormous, but all was "managed with so much economy, that after defraying the expenses of his great expedition to Candahar, his wars in Balk, and other heavy charges, and maintaining a regular army of 200,000 men, Shah Jehan left a treasure, which some reckon at near six, and some at twenty-four millions in coin, besides his vast accumulations in

\* Report of Financial Committee, August, 1832.

wrought gold and silver, and in jewels."\* Our dominion has lasted for nearly a century; we are already in debt fifty millions; our debt is hourly increasing, and we have no "accumulations" of coin or jewels. It is not, therefore, merely wars, but the expensive European element which we employ in wars, and which pervades the whole of our administration, that eats up our finances. The 40,000 European soldiers, whom we employ, cost more than the 200,000 native horse employed by our predecessors.

The pay and allowance of the European officers of a Sepoy regiment, are double the amount of the pay of the men. We start with a demand upon the Treasury of about three millions, for charges defrayed on account of the Indian territory at home, charges arising entirely from that element. We have nearly a thousand Europeans employed in the civil administration, besides Supreme Courts—Ecclesiastical establishments—an Indian navy—territory out of India—Aden, Penang, Burmah—charges involving many millions, now falling upon the revenue of India, from which our predecessors were altogether free. It is no longer matter of surprise then, that they should have been able to pay their way, and to save, notwithstanding their prodigal expenditure, and that we should find the same amount of revenue altogether insufficient to meet our demands upon it.

It is not matter of surprise that we foreigners should be able to manage the mighty concerns of our Indian empire with less economy, than those who have made India their own country. The irrepressible tendency of charge to outgrow revenue in India, has been felt and lamented from our earliest acquisition of dominion. Clive ascribed the disappointment of his hopes of a large surplus of revenue from Bengal to this cause:—"Every man," he said, "that is permitted to make a bill, makes a fortune," and we find the Court of Directors upon more than one occasion animadverting upon it:—

"We have contemplated with much solicitude," they said, (more than twenty years ago)† "the very unsatisfactory present state of your finances, and we have carefully and minutely examined the causes which have led to it. We observe that it has been brought

\* Elphinstone's India, vol. 2, p. 435.

† Letters to Bengal, 19th May, 1830. *Lords' Paper*, 151, of 1830.

about less by the pressure of occasional; and extraordinary expenditure, than by *continual progressive augmentations of charge in every department.*"

And again, as late as last year, the Court says :

"In our letter in this department of 19th August, 1846, we shewed that the expense of the civil establishments in Bengal had risen between the years 1830 and 1841, from 64 to 89 lacs of rupees per annum, and in our letter 9th October, 1850, No. 39, we pointed out that between February 1844, and December 1848, the net increase of civil salaries and establishments has exceeded 36 lacs of rupees per annum. Those additional charges necessarily augmented the annual deficit when it occurred."

It is not then merely from a war expenditure, that our finances are embarrassed, but from increased charges in all departments, and particularly in the European element in all departments; an increase which constantly progresses in spite of every effort to arrest it—not merely an increase of current expenditure, but an increase of dead weight upon the Revenue, in the shape of pensions, retiring allowances, &c. In 1839-40, the charge under this head, including off reckonings was £488,701; in 1849-50, it had increased to £614,303.

Two things are however confidently asserted: one, that our revenues have kept pace with our debts. The other, that those revenues have always been ample to satisfy the demands of a peace expenditure. But the official accounts tell us, that in 1792-3, before we commenced our career of territorial aggrandisement, the Revenue of India was £8,276,650, the debt £7,129,934, or less by more than a million sterling than the annual revenue; that after we had to all appearance finished that career, the revenue was £19,576,089, the debt £50,847,564, or equal to more than two and three-quarter years of the revenue.

The opinion that the "Indian revenues under ordinary circumstances are not only ample to cover all necessary expenditure, but sufficient to yield a considerable surplus towards the liquidation of debt contracted in war,"\* appears to be founded upon a fact, and upon an assumption—the fact that "in the three years prior to the

\* Letter from the Court of Directors, June 1852 Appendix to Commons' Report, p. 484.

expedition to Afghanistan, there was an average surplus of upwards of a million sterling—the assumption, that the opium revenue will continue to be as productive as it has been for the last eight years. If, however, we look narrowly into the sources of this surplus, we shall find them to have been in a great measure casual and precarious.\* We had a surplus of nearly a million sterling in the year 1793-4, but this gradually melted away, and was converted into a deficit in 1797-8, although these were years of profound peace. From 1806 to 1814, we had a long interval of peace, but no surplus revenue. From 1818 to 1824, and from 1826 to 1836 we had peace,† and although the finances of India had been assisted from the commercial revenues of the Company, to the extent of nearly five millions, yet the revenue was found insufficient to meet the demands of a peace expenditure, and in 1834-5, the deficit amounted to £191,477.

But from 1834 to 1836, “a rapid reduction was effected in the debt of India, by the application of a portion of the Company’s commercial assets to that object,”‡ and it was in the reduction of a charge for interest upon debt, effected by this adventitious aid, that the foundation of a surplus was laid. The surplus amounted in three years to £3,470,054, which was almost wholly made up by reductions in charge for interest, increase in the revenue from opium—and from the Government bank at Madras.‡

It was not then from any increase in the permanent sources of revenue, but from adventitious aids, and from precarious and casual receipts, that a surplus was created in those three years. There was, indeed, an actual decline in the permanent sources of revenue in the

\* Tucker on India Finance.

† Appendix to Commons’ Report, 1852, p. 485.

	1831-5.	1835-6.	1836-7.	1837-8.
Interest upon debt	1,774,153	1,655,287	1,345,619	1,365,882
Opium revenue	728,517	1,399,009	1,439,031	1,487,201
Government Bank, Madras	“	86,612	12,590	9,297
Total surplus for three years				£3,470,054
From reduction of interest upon debt				956,171
From increase of opium revenue				2,132,780
From Madras Bank				108,508
				£3,204,459

three years, which, upon the whole, yielded a surplus;\* and there was a gradual decline in the surplus itself, from £1,441,512 to £780,310, before the Affghan war had commenced; so that if our relations with China had been disturbed a few years earlier, there would have been an almost† uninterrupted stream of deficits from 1797-8 to the present day; for the surplus, as we have shewn, mainly arose from the Opium Revenue, and that revenue was reduced by two-thirds in the second year of the war with China.

We are told, moreover, that there has been a diminution in the total receipts from land in the old provinces of Bengal within the last five years—a deterioration also in the land revenue from the old territory of the North-West Provinces; an increase in the land revenue of Madras, not equal, however, to the loss sustained by the abolition of the transit duties in that Presidency; an increase in the land revenue of Bombay more than counterbalanced by increase of charge; and if we compare the average receipts from the sale of salt, and customs combined,—a moiety of which consists of a tax upon salt,—for the six years ending with 1844-45, with the receipts in the six years ending in 1850-51,‡ we shall find a deterioration in the revenue of the latter period of about £100,000 a-year,§ whilst a comparison of the yield

\* Revenue, exclusive of opium :

1834-5 . . . . .	£13,036,908
1835-6 . . . . .	13,580,748
1836-7 . . . . .	13,018,804
1837-8 . . . . .	12,800,837

† There was a surplus in 1820-21 of . . . . .	£135,898
in 1821-22 of . . . . .	£412,876
in 1830-31 of . . . . .	£110,199

but these sums are greatly exaggerated, by the conversion of rupees into sterling money, at an artificial rate of exchange.

‡ Total revenue from customs and salt :

From 1839-40 to 1844-45 . . . . .	£19,288,397
Average . . . . .	3,214,732
Ditto, 1845-6 to 1850-51 . . . . .	18,726,386
Average . . . . .	3,121,064*

§ Total collection from salt and customs from 1841-42 to 1844-45	£16,175,599
“ “ “ “ from 1846-47 to 1850-51	15,572,288
Decrease . . . . .	603,311

\* Appendix to Commons' Report, 1852, pp. 276. 450, 451.



from opium for similar periods, taking the three years from 1835-6 to 1838-9, instead of the three years of the Chinese war, when the opium revenue was unnaturally depressed, gives an average increase in the last six years of very nearly a million sterling.

It is indeed a melancholy fact, revealed to us by these papers, and of which the Indian authorities appear to be quite aware, that the opium revenue\* is the great regulator of the Indian exchequer. Whether there be a surplus, or a deficit, depends entirely upon the demand for this drug in China; so that, if anything were to occur to deprive us of the millions which it now yields, we should be utterly unable to pay our way, even in time of peace.

"The fluctuations," say the authorities, "in the increase from opium for the last ten years, shew to what extraordinary vicissitudes this source of revenue is subject, and how incumbent it is to regulate the charges of Government without depending too much upon the opium receipts. In the four years from 1838-9 to 1841-2, owing to the state of our relations with China, the income from opium scarcely averaged 80 lacs per annum. \* \* \* \* In the succeeding six years, from 1842-43 to 1847-48, the income will have averaged nearly 230 lacs per annum. \* \* \* \* \* Had the net receipts from opium continued at their average rate during the fifteen years prior to 1842-43, instead of being augmented to the extent already stated, your Government must have borrowed seven crores more than it has done to supply the annual deficiency." Again, four years later, in June 1852, they observe: "In 1849-50, the net revenue from opium greatly exceeded that of any former period, it having amounted to 3½ crores of rupees (£3,309,637), and thus a surplus in the finances of India was realized sooner than could have been expected."

We have seen that the surplus which existed in the three years preceding the Affghan war, was produced mainly by a large and rapid increase in the receipts from opium. The revenue from that source, indeed, in three years, exceeded the amount of the surplus by nearly a million sterling; and in the three years ending in 1850-51, it exceeded the opium revenue in the three years of the surplus by upwards of four millions. No stronger proof can be afforded that the

\* Total revenue from opium :

From 1835-6 to 1837-8, and from	
1842-3 to 1844-5. . . . .	£9,746,619
Average . . . . .	1,624,436
Ditto, from 1845-6 to 1850-1 . . . . .	15,571,571
Average . . . . .	2,596,262

solvency of India depends entirely upon a source of supply, which may be cut from under us by renewed altercations with China, or by a change in the policy of that empire. A revival of hostilities with China would bring the revenue at once down from three millions, its present amount, to three hundred thousand pounds, its amount when our war with China was at its height.\*

Are we then warranted in thinking favourably of the financial condition of a country, which is dependent upon a precarious source of income for means to pay its way in time of peace? and which, while constantly liable to war, has no resource, when war occurs, but to add to its debt by loans raised at high interest?

We are keen enough in detecting flaws in the financial state of our neighbours, and from constantly recurring deficits and increase of debt, we augur unfavourably of the financial condition of Austria and France. *Deficits have been the rule, equilibrium in the finances of India the rare exception, for a century*; and yet we argue from the exception against the rule, and venture to say, "that the resources of India, under ordinary circumstances, are not only ample to cover all necessary expenditure, but sufficient to yield a considerable surplus towards the liquidation of debt." We say this, and confess, in the same breath, that the main stays of our exchequer—the land revenue and the salt revenue—are either in a languid or a stagnant state; and that one-sixth of our revenue rests upon the most precarious foundation. We act, moreover, as if our resources were inexhaustible, and our credit unbounded; but the very fact that the salt revenue—which, as it hits every one, and the poorer classes harder than the rich, and is therefore a gauge of the capability of India to bear more taxation—is

SURPLUS.		REVENUE FROM OPIUM.	
*1835-6 . . .	£1,441,512 . . . . .	£1,399,009	
1836-7 . . .	1,248,224 . . . . .	1,439,031	
1837-8 . . .	780,318 . . . . .	1,487,291	
Total : .	£3,470,054	£4,325,331	
1848-49 . . . . .		2,667,902	
1849-50 . . . . .		3,309,637	
1850-51 . . . . .		2,700,662	
		£8,678,201	
• Increase . . . . .		4,352,870	

*Appendix to Commons Report, p. 276.*

rather on the decline than otherwise, is proof that no other tax would be productive : and another fact, viz. that the principal creditors of India are not the people of India, seeking a safe investment for their surplus capital in Government securities, but the servants of the Government, or the European community in India,\* is proof that our credit is extremely limited. The public servants in India pour their savings yearly into the public Treasury, under a conviction that if the finances of India should be embarrassed, the national exchequer will come forward to their aid ; but the public of India appear, from the comparatively small amount of stock which they hold, to feel no such confidence.

It is indeed a significant fact, that in times of emergency we can raise no money for the public service of India at a lower rate than 5 per cent. Proposals have frequently been made to transfer a portion of the Indian debt to England, by borrowing in the home market upon better terms, but those always have been put aside, and it has been found impossible to raise even so small a sum as a million and a half for railroads, without a guarantee of from 5 to 4½ per cent. Would there be this shyness in investing money in Indian securities, if our financial system was as sound, and our credit as good as it is often asserted to be ?

It is obvious that our finances can never be in a safe state, or our credit stable, so long as we are dependent upon a precarious source of revenue, for the means of meeting a peace expenditure, and upon loans, when we engage in war.

It has always been matter of regret to the most far-seeing of our Indian statesmen, that no financial provision should have been made in times of peace for the eventualities of war. " I have again and again," said Sir Thomas Munro,† " urged the expediency of lowering our land revenue, and of establishing a fixed and moderate assessment, because I am satisfied that this measure alone would be more effectual than all other measures combined, in promoting the improvement both of the country and the people. India should, like England, be relieved from a part of her burdens, whenever the state of affairs may permit such a change. The remission granted in time of peace, might be again imposed in war, and even something additional. Every state should have the means of raising extraordi-

\* See Appendix to Commons' Report, p. 406.

† Life, vol. iii. p. 389 ; vol. ii. p. 255.

nary taxes in time of war. If it has not, it can only meet its expenses by reductions in times of peace, a resource which must soon fail, as it cannot, without danger, be carried beyond a certain limit.”\*

Having always lived beyond our income, we have never been able to relieve India of any of her burdens. Nay, we have rather increased than diminished them; if we have abolished some vexatious taxes which were laid on by our predecessors, and done away with a system of transit duties of our own devising, we have, on the other hand, imposed a salt tax, which obliges the people to pay four, five, and in some cases ten times as much for a necessary of life as they did under their native rulers, a tax from which none can escape, but which is felt most by the very poorest classes. We have, moreover, invented a stamp tax, a source of revenue unknown to native governments, which is, in fact, a tax upon justice, as it is from stamps used in legal proceedings that this source of revenue is mainly fed.

All attempts to extend the range of our taxation, or to innovate in taxation, have signally failed. It is well known that the natives of India,—the most patient on the face of the earth under burdens to which they are accustomed, revolt at once when attempts are made to impose new taxes upon them. Numerous instances of this occurred under the Native Governments, and our efforts to impose a tax upon houses at Benares, and a police tax at Bareilly, were met by a stubborn resistance, which ended in the defeat of the Government, after a good deal of blood had been spilt. A similar resistance was experienced upon our attempt a few years ago to double the price of salt in the Bombay territory, as a substitute for the tax upon trades and professions which we had abolished.

“The natives of India,” said the great statesman† to whose authority we have so often referred, “are too intelligent and acute

\* A striking proof of the danger of a reckless reduction of establishments in time of peace was afforded when Lord Hastings took charge of the government of India, in 1818. He found the army so reduced in numbers, as to be incapable of discharging their ordinary duties. Many Sepoys had demanded their discharge, in consequence of the heavy duties imposed upon them. Deep discontent prevailed in the native army, and a tone was assumed by native powers in their intercourse with the British Government, which was quite unprecedented. See Lord Hastings’ summary of his Administration. Appendix to Report of Committee of House of Commons, August, 1832.

† Sir Thomas Munro.

to overlook any sources from whence the public revenue could with propriety be increased, and whenever they appear to have neglected the establishment of a productive tax, it will probably be found upon examination to have proceeded from attention to the prejudices of caste and religion."

If the Native Governments, therefore, were contented with a tax upon salt, not equal to a fourth of our impost, it was because they found that taxation could not be carried beyond a certain limit, and that a high tax upon land and a high tax upon salt were incompatible; that the one must be paid at the expense of the other. We cannot increase the price of salt; we cannot count confidently upon the maintenance of the opium revenue at its present standard. We cannot impose fresh taxes; we cannot with safety, even in time of profound peace, reduce our military establishments below a certain level. What, then, under these circumstances, are our financial prospects? "Very gloomy," say the Indian authorities,\* "if we look only at the years of deficit; but if we look at the years of peace and of surplus, they are not discouraging. It is obvious, indeed," they say, "that the ordinary revenue of India is more than sufficient to meet ordinary demands upon it." But what would be the condition of an individual who in framing an estimate of his income and expenditure, should leave no margin for contingencies? Nations which are taxable, and whose credit is extensive, need not, in times of peace, make provision for such contingencies; but India, as we have seen, does not come within either of these categories; its income is fixed,—to a certain extent, precarious,—and its credit limited; and what must be the result if we continue to build expectations upon years of peace and of surplus, when excess of charge has been the rule, excess of revenue the rare exception, for the greatest part of a century?

"The restoration and re-establishment of peace upon a basis which we trust will prove lasting, will immediately bring the total expenditure within the revenue, and lead to a surplus in the next year."† This was the official language immediately after the first Sikh war; but the expectation was no sooner formed than crushed,‡ by a diminution in the receipts of 60 lacs, and an increase in the charges of 18 lacs, making a difference, the wrong way, of £700,000.

The strong hope expressed that all financial difficulties had "at

\* Appendix, p. 480.

† Appendix, p. 436

‡ Appendix, p. 448.

length been overcome by the establishment of peace throughout India," at the end of the first Sikh war, was disappointed by the breaking out of the second; but the same sanguine expectations were revived of enduring peace and financial prosperity the moment that contest was over. "This result will prevent the recurrence of such expensive and devastating wars as have lately prevailed."\* The ink was hardly dry upon this sentence when the second Burmese war broke out, and with the news came "Estimates of the Revenues and Charges of India for the year 1851-2," from which it appears that the deficiency in that year amounted to 78,84,678 rupees, or upwards of £780,000.†

This was the deficit at the end of the second year of peace, and with this deficit we entered into another war. We have seen that a surplus revenue which had arisen in 1793-4 was converted into a deficit in three years, though these three were years of peace. We have seen that it was not until after twenty dreary years of deficits that a momentary surplus again appeared; that after ten years of uninterrupted peace,—principally by adventitious aids, and by precarious receipts—a surplus again was produced, that this surplus was gradually diminishing before it was extinguished by the breaking out of the Affghan war. From the year 1834-5 to the year 1850-51, the finances of India were assisted by adventitious receipts to the extent of upwards of twelve millions sterling.‡ These extra sources of supply are now completely exhausted, and India is thrown, for the first time, entirely upon its fixed revenues for means to meet its expenditure. We start then with an acknowledged deficit of upwards of £700,000, with a war, which cannot fail to add largely to that deficit, and with an increase of permanent charge of upwards of three millions. If we compare the financial state of India in the year 1850-51 with its state in 1837-8, the last year of the surplus, we have the following results:

Increase of revenue	£4,341,210
„ of charge	5,800,237
„ of debt	17,452,028
„ interest upon ditto	841,352

\* Appendix, p. 486.

† Appendix, p. 486.

‡ From commercial assets . . . . . £11,252,897

Sundry receipts . . . . . 1,566,883

12,819,780

See account in Appendix, p. 276.

If this increase of revenue had arisen from sources which are under our control, or if there was any reasonable prospect of our being able to reduce the charges even to a level with the receipts, our financial position would still be worse now than it was in 1837-8, when we had less revenue and lower charges. But the increase arises principally from opium,\* a source of revenue which may be snatched from us at any time, and from the acquisition of territory which does not pay its expenses.

Within the last twelve years we have enlarged our territory by 167,013 square miles, which carries a population of 8,572,530 souls. Our principal acquisitions have been Scinde, the Punjab, and Sattara, the civil charges† of which go far to absorb the revenues, and which, including military charges, entail a heavy burden upon our finances. Scinde, when under its native princes, paid us a tribute of three lacs of rupees a-year, and Lahore a tribute of twenty lacs; if we add these to the total excess of charge over revenue, we shall find that

* OPIUM RECEIPTS . 1837-8 . . .	£1,487,291
1850-51 . . .	2,700,662
	<hr/>
	1,213,361

† Comparative statements of revenues and charges for the years

	1837-8.	1850-1.	INCREASE.
Revenue	£14,288,128	£18,620,328	£4,341,210
Charges	13,507,237	19,308,047	5,800,237
Debt	33,356,536	50,807,564	17,452,028
Interest on debt	1,504,723	2,346,075	
Surplus	780,318	Deficit 678,709	Deficit 841,352

REVENUE.	CIVIL CHARGES.	MILITARY CHARGES.
Punjab . . . . . R.1,30,05000	96,22000	40,00000*
Scinde . . . . . 27,00000	20,00000	20,00000
Sattara . . . . . 20,00000	27,00000	
Total . . . . . 1,77,00000	1,43,22000	60,00000
		<hr/>
	Total Charges . . . . .	2,03,22000
	Excess of charge . . . . .	26,22000
	Add Tribute . . . . .	23,00000
	Net loss . . . . .	49,22000

\* The military charges of the Punjab are not stated in the accounts, although there are three times as many men located there as in Scinde. We have set down the Military expenses at twice the amount of those of Scinde.

we are financially the worse for these acquisitions, to the extent of at least half a million a year, for it is a great mistake to suppose, that the current charges for troops cover our military expenditure. Every increase of territory involves an immense outlay, for buildings, stores, pensions, retiring allowances, and casualties: particularly casualties amongst European troops, as every English soldier is supposed to cost £100, from the time of his enlistment, until he commences active service in India. The increase of payments in England, on account of territory, from £1,974,665, the sum at which it stood in 1837-8, before we entered upon our last period of war, to £2,352,800, the amount expended in 1850-51, is proof of this fact.

If peace therefore had continued, we should have entered upon our new financial career, with an additional demand upon our resources—additional as compared with the demand of 1837-8—of £841,352 increase of interest upon debt—of £500,000 excess of charge in our newly acquired territory—and of £4,458,885 excess of general charges.\* Of the total increase of charge in 1850-51, viz. £5,800,237, £3,265,921 arose in the military, and £2,534,316, in the non-military departments—no expectation is held out of any reduction in the charges; and from the fact that the fixed military charges had actually increased rather than diminished in the second year of peace,† there would appear to have been no prospect of a reduction in general charge even had peace been procured, and experience has taught us, that the charges of India have invariably increased faster than the receipts.

What then are our ways and means to meet these extraordinary demands? It is acknowledged that what we may call our permanent sources of revenue, land, salt, and customs are either on the decline, or stagnant, and that where there is a languid increase in those

* Increase of charge in 1850-51 over 1837-8 . . . . .	£5,800,237
Deduct increase of interest £841,352, and for territory 500,000	
remainder . . . . .	4,458,88

† Military charges :—

1847-48 . . . .	£9,167,037
1848-49 . . . .	9,025,060
1849-50 . . . .	9,406,417
1850-51 . . . .	9,933,545



branches, as in Madras and Bombay, the charges grow faster than the revenue. It is in the opium revenue only that there is vitality, and when we find that there have been fluctuations in the receipts from that source, within the last few years of nearly two millions sterling,\* when we recollect that a deadly blow might be struck at this source of supply, by renewed hostilities with China, or by internal regulations in that empire, we shall see the full danger of our present financial position, our solvency depending as it does even in time of peace, exclusively upon the produce of the opium revenue. It was by an increase in that produce of no less than £641,734 in the year 1849-50, that a momentary equilibrium was established in the finances, an equilibrium that was disturbed in the following year by a corresponding fall in the receipts, and which we should not have been able to re-establish had peace continued, even if we could have secured as large an average receipt from that source for the next seven years, as it yielded in the preceding seven. But we have again a war expenditure to provide for, and when we recollect, that the first war in Burmah, which lasted only two years, cost India 15 millions, we cannot expect to come out of the present one without a serious addition to our present burdens. We are now masters not only of all Hindostan but of much territory out of Hindostan—we have seen, that *whilst we have not trebled our revenues, we have increased our debt more than six fold, and we are at this moment adding to that debt in order to make good deficiencies of income.*†

We seem, therefore, to have been imitating the example of the man “greedy of acres” in this country, who borrows money at five per cent in order to purchase an estate which will barely yield him three. We have been urged on in this “earth hunger,” first,

\* Opium revenue :—

1847-48 . . .	£1,559,423
1848-49 . . .	2,667,902
1849-50 . . .	3,309,637
1850-51 . . .	2,700,662

† Total revenue from opium for 1844-45 to 1850-51 . . .	£17,616,536
Average . . . . .	2,516,876
Revenue of 1850-51 . . . . .	2,700,662
Deficit of 1850-51 . . . . .	678,709
Do. of 1851-2, Rs. 78,84,678 . . . . .	710,000

by a notion that extension of territory is the necessary consequence of a successful war; secondly, that territory must needs be as profitable in our hands as in the hands of its native owners. Clive was of a different opinion; he thought that Oude would be more profitable to us financially and politically in the hands of its own sovereigns than if placed under our direct rule; he therefore reinstated the Nabob Sujah ud Dowlah in his dominions after the victory of Culpac in 1765, although the attack made upon us by the Nabob had been unprovoked, we having undertaken to protect his territory from all enemies, the Nabob paying the expense; and it was the opinion both of Clive and Hastings — certainly very competent judges — that the extension of our territory beyond the Bengal provinces would be a burden instead of a benefit. Looking at the question merely with reference to finance, the soundness of their opinion cannot be questioned. The more territory the more debt, and why? because we foreigners cannot make territory as profitable as its native owners. Our management is wasteful, and we are enormously cheated. Cheating the revenue is a vice common in all countries, and especially so in a government so emphatically foreign as our Government in India. A striking proof of this is afforded in the present financial state of the Punjab. The Punjab, after supporting an army of 100,000 men, and a splendid court, gave Runjeet Sing a large surplus revenue. We hardly realize enough from it to pay a couple of regiments, in addition to its civil charges. The same story may be told of Scinde, of Sattara, and it is doubtful whether any territorial acquisition that we have made since we first obtained possession of Bengal has yielded as much under our rule as it paid to us in tribute. Our Eastern settlements, Singapore, Penang, and Malacca, *exclusive of the pay of the troops*, cost India upon the average more than £100,000 a year.\* The territory we took from the Burmese in 1826, including the military charges, costs as much more.† Aden is a drain upon us to the extent of £11,154.‡ The charge of these outlying settlements is thrown upon India. We cannot relieve the people of India from any of their burdens, because money is required for the maintenance of possessions which India has no more to do with than it has with Java or Japan. We have just

\* Appendix, p. 463.

† Revenue.

‡ Appendix, p. 293.

taken the territory of Pegu—a preliminary only to the absorption of the whole of Burmah, nay, to a much wider stride, for we are informed by an influential paper,\* and which echoes English opinion in India, that “every one out of England is now ready to acknowledge that the whole of Asia, from the Indus to the sea of Ochotzk, is destined to become the patrimony of that race which the Normans thought six centuries ago they had finally crushed, but which now stands at the head of European civilization. We are placed, it is said, by the mysterious but unmistakeable designs of Providence in command of Asia, and the people of England must not lay the flattering unction to their souls that they can escape from the responsibility of this lofty and important position by simply denouncing the means by which England has attained it.”

The people of England will do well then to be on the alert, and ascertain before they assent to this “lofty and imposing position,” who is to pay for the enterprise? If forgetful of every obligation, they were to endeavour to saddle India with war charges, it would be to no purpose, for India is already sinking under her own burdens. The most sanguine view that could be taken of Indian finances before we came into collision with the Burmese war, was that “if we managed well and kept out of wars, we were in no immediate danger of bankruptcy.”† That this danger is much aggravated by the war‡ in which we are now engaged, is proved by the fact—that the first Burmese war, although it lasted little more than two years, added thirteen millions to the Indian debt. It is not, therefore, a little surprising to find it treated by the Indian authorities as an expedition that might for a time arrest a reduction in charges; but which would not entail any additional expenditure.§ This sanguine view, has however since been corrected, and it has been asserted with some triumph,|| that the war expenditure will not

\* Friend of India, January 6, 1853.

† Campbell's Modern India, p. 418.

‡ The great Duke's opinion, which has been adduced in favour of this war, depended of course, upon the case that was put before him. If he had been reminded that the first Burmese war cost fifteen millions—that thirty millions have been spent in subsequent wars—that the revenues of India were inadequate to meet the demands of a peace establishment; we cannot doubt that his language would have been “then suit your resentment to your convenience, make reprisals on the Burmese, but don't plunge into a war, which may bring you to the verge of bankruptcy.”

§ Appendix to Report of Commons, p. 480.

|| Debate in the House of Commons on the Burmese war.

exceed £30,000 a month. This would be serious enough, if it was to last only for a few months of war; but experience has taught us, that a war expenditure does not cease with the establishment of peace. Every acquisition of territory involves the necessity of a permanent increase to the army particularly in that inordinately expensive branch of it, the European, and the remoter the acquisition from the metropolis—the greater the increase. Since 1837, the last year of peace, we have added 16,000 men to our European force, at a cost of more than £500,000 a year.\*

We have said enough to shew that the financial history of India, has been a history of delusions from our first acquisition of empire in the East, and that the revenues of India have never been sufficient *unaided* to meet the demands of a peace establishment.†

We have shewn that the more territory we get the heavier are our embarrassments. In the year 1792, the year in which we first began to extend our dominion, we had a surplus revenue of nearly a million; the debt in that year was not equal to the annual revenue,‡ nor the interest to ~~one-sixteenth~~ <sup>one-fiftieth</sup> of the revenue. After having enormously increased our territory, we have an annual deficit of upwards of a million sterling, and it would now take the revenue of more than two years and a half to cover the debt, and the interest of the debt is now equal to one ninth part of the revenue, notwithstanding a reduction of more than one half in the rate of interest at which we raised our loans.§

• European troops of all arms,

1837 — 27,814

1850 — 43,579

† “ Between the years 1814 and 1834, the finances of India had assistance from the commercial profits of the Company, to the extent of five millions, and from 1834 to 1850-1, to the extent of twelve millions.

‡	REVENUE.	DEBT.	INTEREST.
1792-93	8,276,770	7,992,548	526,205.
1850-51	18,629,338	50,847,564	2,346,075.

§ The rates of interest have been gradually reduced from twelve to ten, to eight, to six, to five, and notice is now given that they will in future be four per cent. It is a significant fact, that this reduction in the rates of interest upon our loans has been made, whilst the general rates of interest in India remain undiminished. Twelve per cent, and even much higher rates, still obtain in

Every year we are obliged to borrow in order to find the means of paying the interest of our debt, and in comparing our present revenue with the revenue as it stood before we began our career of conquest, we are to remember that that branch of it which though subject to great vicissitudes, is upon the whole the most flourishing, viz., the opium, would have been just as large as it is now, if we had never added an acre to our territory; for it is mainly the produce of our ancient possessions. It may be, at no distant period, the unpleasant duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to renew those applications for loans in aid of the finances of India, which, as we have seen, were not unfrequently made in the early part of the century;—such a prospect, however disagreeable, is before us. We can scarcely suppose that the people<sup>a</sup> of England will look with satisfaction upon any increase of their burthens to make up for the embarrassments of Indian finance, but to this they must soon come, unless greater responsibility be laid upon the Indian Government, and greater wisdom mark the administration of our Indian empire.

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the general transactions of the country. Our Indian Government borrows at lower rates, because its creditors in the main are Europeans, who, seeking for secure remittances to the mother country, have the choice between the Government funds in India, and the Government funds in England, and therefore freely lend their money to the Indian Government, provided they can realize one or two per cent more for it than they could get from the Government of England. It is clear that, if the credit of the Government in India was national, they could only borrow at the national rates of interest, and to these rates they would be driven should their demand for money ever exceed the savings or the profits of the European community.

**INDIA REFORM SOCIETY.**—On Saturday, the 12th of March, a MEETING of the Friends of India was held in Charles Street, St. James's Square, with a view of bringing public opinion to bear on the Imperial Parliament in the case of India, so as to obtain due attention to the complaints and claims of the inhabitants of that vast empire. H. D. SEYMOUR, Esq., M.P., having been called to the chair, the following Resolutions were agreed to by the Meeting:—

1. That the character of the alterations to be effected in the constitution of our Indian Government at the termination of the East India Company's Charter Act, on the 30th of April, 1854, is a question which demands the most ample and serious consideration.

2. That although Committees of both Houses of Parliament have been appointed, in conformity with the practice on each preceding renewal of the Charter Act, for the purpose of investigating the nature and the results of our Indian Administration, those Committees have been appointed on the present occasion at a period so much later than usual, that the interval of time remaining before the expiration of the existing powers of the East India Company is too short to permit the possibility of collecting such evidence as would show what alterations are required in our Indian Government.

3. That the inquiry now being prosecuted by Committees of the Legislature will be altogether unsatisfactory if it be confined to the evidence of officials and of servants of the East India Company, and conducted and terminated without reference to the petitions and wishes of the more intelligent of the natives of India.

4. That it is the duty of the friends of India to insist upon a temporary Act to continue the present Government of India for a period not exceeding three years, so that time may be given for such full inquiry and deliberation as will enable Parliament within that period to legislate permanently for the future administration of our Indian Empire.

5. That in order to obtain such a measure, this Meeting constitutes itself an "India Reform Society," and names the undermentioned gentlemen as a Committee.

T. Barnes, Esq., M.P.  
J. Bell, Esq., M.P.  
W. Biggs, Esq., M.P.  
J. F. B. Blackett, Esq., M.P.  
G. Bowyer, Esq., M.P.  
J. Bright, Esq., M.P.  
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J. Cheetham, Esq., M.P.  
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M. G. Fielden, Esq., M.P.  
Lieut.-Gen. Sir J. F. Fitzgerald,  
K.C.B., M.P.  
W. R. S. Fitzgerald, Esq., M.P.  
M. Foster, Esq., M.P.  
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J. Sullivan, Esq.  
G. Thompson, Esq., M.P.  
F. Warren, Esq.  
J. A. Wise, Esq., M.P.

Correspondence on all matters connected with the Society to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, by whom subscriptions will be received in aid of its object.

JOHN DICKINSON, Jun., Hon. Sec.

Committee Rooms, Clarence Chambers, 12, Haymarket,  
April 12th, 1858.



# INDIA REFORM.

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No. III.

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## NOTES ON INDIA,

BY DR. BUIST

OF BOMBAY.

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PUBLIC WORKS.

# NOTES ON INDIA.

BY DR. BUIST OF BOMBAY.

FROM the reports of the Committees of April last it would appear that the Act of 1784 encumbered with the various deteriorations it has suffered by each successive enactment is about to be extended, with little alteration, to 1874.

For the next twenty years the natives of Hindostan are as heretofore to be in a great measure excluded from public employment in their own country, although pronounced by Act of Parliament equally eligible for this as Europeans, and proved by the testimony of the Duke of Wellington, Lord William Bentinck, the Earl of Ellenborough, Sir George Clarke, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Holt Mackenzie, and all the ablest statesmen of the age, eminently qualified for office. We are to have, till the close of the present century, a constitution continued to us which was framed near the end of the last; we are to have three separate sets of government for India, the principal function of each of which seems to be, to thwart and retard the operations of the others; the Leadenhall Street division costing £130,000 a-year, being merely the minister of patronage, and place of record, without one atom of power beyond this, save that of suggesting, criticising, and obstructing; the Board of Control costing £25,000 a-year, managed by a chairman, appointed without any necessary qualification to the office, whose average tenure of service has, since 1820, fallen short of two years, void of all responsibility, endowed with absolute power, governing in secret, and presenting to Parliament, when asked for information, collections of papers so disgracefully vitiated and garbled as to mislead, in place of enlightening, and whose main contributions to the policy of India during the past twenty years have been wars, which have cost thirty millions sterling. With three governments in India, costing half a million sterling annually amongst them, so completely under

A parcel of clever clerks at home,\* as to be compelled to send home particulars of every thing they say or do, to be commented on, checked, or controlled, by parties incapable, from position, of forming a correct opinion on what they decide; and finally, in India, we are to have Indian education neglected, improvement thrown aside, irrigation and the means of communication overlooked, though to neglect such as these we have, since the last Charter Act, been indebted for famines which have swept nearly two millions of human beings away, and caused a loss to the revenue of above eight millions sterling, a sum, if properly expended, sufficient to have averted for ever the calamities by which, in a few years, its loss has been occasioned. Against things so monstrous as these, in reference to which Parliament seems deaf or unheeding, it has been resolved to appeal through the Press to the people of England, in the firm belief that were they aware of the tremendous responsibilities they were incurring by the mismanagement, of which they are the authors, they would afford India such redress as she is entitled to seek from their hands, the refusal of which may yet be productive of such fearful consequences.

History contains no record of anything so strange, or so reprehensible, as the neglect with which Englishmen treat the interests of the British Empire in the East. The disfranchisement of Gattton or old Sarum occupied ten times the attention, and was listened to with a hundred times the anxiety, that is bestowed upon an empire which contains an area equal to half that of Europe.

#### WHAT IS INDIA?

India occupies from the 7th to the 32nd parallel, from the 67th to the 90th meridian. Its boundary line is 11,260 miles in length, or half the circumference of the globe. It comprises an area of 1,309,200 square miles, ten times that of France, of which 800,758 belong to England, 508,442 to native subsidiaries or allies. It extends from the sea level to an altitude of 27,000 feet, and its climate varies from that of the torrid zone to that of the arctic regions—where the huge Himalayas rise far within the line of perpetual snow. On its western marches along the Indus from the sea

\* Lord Ellenborough's evidence.

to the borders of the Punjaub are regions where rain hardly ever falls where the houses are built of unburnt bricks, and a shower once in five years is a rarity. On its eastern frontier, under the same parallel, in the Assia Hills, and at a similar distance from the sea, the average fall is from 3 to 400 inches during the three summer months: as much is often measured in forty-eight hours as suffices England for a year. It has rivers, double the size of the Danube or the Rhine, shrunk up at one season of the year, so as to be almost un-navigable, swelled out at another season so as to become vast inland seas, the one shore hardly visible from the other, carrying as much solid matter annually to the ocean as would build up an English county from beneath low to above high water mark.

#### POPULATION.

The races by which these vast regions are occupied, are as strange and diversified in character as are the features of the country and the climate; they are of every form, hue, and faith, from the huge Patan or Beloochi, to the short but active Goorka, and diminutive man of Malabar; from the Todawars, who dwell on trees, and feed on reptiles and vermin,—the Khoonds, slaughtering their hecatombs of children,—the Arab, dark as the Ethiopian, and the Ethiopians themselves in abundance; the Parsee and the Mogul, scarcely distinguishable from the Englishman in point of hue—to the learned Brahmin, studying the stars, calculating eclipses, and constructing astronomical instruments, compared to which those of modern times are but toys in point of size. The distinguished astronomer Jayasinha, Rajah of Amblhere, nearly two centuries ago had observatories constructed at Delhi, Benares, Muttra, and Oujein, each possessed of equatorials of such size as to allow above three inches and a half to the degree, each degree being divided into minutes: the gnomons of the sun dials were from a hundred to a hundred and twenty feet in length. The bodily and the moral maladies which afflict a community of such mass and diversity of material, are almost equally frightful in point of character and magnitude. Famines occurring almost decennially, some of which within our time, have swept their millions away. In 1833, fifty thousand persons perished in the month of September in Lucknow; at Khanpoor twelve hundred died of want; and half a million sterling was subscribed by the

bountiful to relieve the destitute. In Guntoor two hundred and fifty thousand human beings, seventy-four thousand bullocks, a hundred and fifty-nine thousand milch cattle, and three hundred thousand sheep and goats, died of starvation. Fifty thousand people perished in Marwar; and in the North West Provinces, half a million of human lives are supposed to have been lost. The living preyed upon the dead; mothers devoured their children; and the human imagination could scarcely picture the scenes of horror that pervaded the land. In twenty months' time a million and a half of people must have died of hunger or of its immediate consequences. The direct pecuniary loss occasioned to government by this single visitation exceeded five millions sterling,—a sum which would have gone far to avert the calamity from which it arose, had it been expended in constructing thoroughfares to connect the interior with the sea coast or districts where scarcity prevailed, with those where human food was to be had in abundance; or on canals to bear forth to the soil, thirsty and barren for want of moisture, the unbounded supplies our rivers carry to the ocean. India has indeed been the birthplace or the cradle of the most frightful maladies that have ever visited the earth: a hundred and fifty thousand persons perished of cholera betwixt its appearance on the Ganges in 1816, and the time it reached Western India the year after. In 1820 it swept away one-fourth of the whole population of the Mauritius; before 1831, fifty millions of human beings are supposed to have been destroyed by it in various parts of the world. The plague of Marwar in 1837 carried off ten thousand, one-fourth of the population in a few months; and in 1849 the Mahamurree swept away one-fourth of the inhabitants where it prevailed, in Gurhwal 88 per cent died of those attacked.

The crimes of India are nearly as frightful as its maladies. The existence of Thuggue, the practice of which is represented in the frescoes of Ajunta as having prevailed above two thousand years ago, has become known to us within the present century, and is scarcely yet extinguished. Infanticide, by which tens and hundreds of thousands of female children must have perished since it first became known to us sixty years ago, has been extinguished barely two years since. The extinction of widow-burning, is of somewhat older date within our territories, but the practice still prevails upon our borders. Ten years ago the existence of a fraternity of plunderers, consisting of

nearly three hundred persons, was discovered in the populous city of Bombay. It had prevailed for a quarter of a century, netting a clear gain, as shewn by well kept books, of from fifty to eighty thousand pounds a-year, or above a million in all, in the course of the establishment of the confederation. Ship burning was a branch of business with them, and at Bombay and Calcutta together above three hundred vessels mostly of the largest size, worth close on nine millions sterling, had been destroyed by the incendiary since 1781. Within the last twelvemonth it has come to light that regular armies of depredators, recognized by native chiefs who share their spoils, exist in some of our oldest North West Provinces, who disperse themselves every autumn over the country in brigades and detachments, carrying their ravages into the hearts of our best-ordered cities, and returning in April with their plunder, to be divided over the country; these crimes having escaped detection from the sympathy of the Natives being with the criminals rather than with the Law, or from their natural timidity deterring them from making disclosures.

In governing India, England makes herself responsible for the welfare of an empire which contains a hundred and fifty millions of people, yields a gross revenue of about thirty millions sterling a year, maintains an army of nearly four hundred thousand men, of whom forty thousand are Europeans, at a charge of upwards of twelve millions a year, and affords appointments as covenanted servants or commissioned officers to ten thousand English gentlemen, who receive incomes from the age of eighteen to the end of their days, averaging in one case a thousand, and in the other four hundred pounds a year. The army of Bengal alone, comprising 23,247 Europeans, 138,255 native soldiers, with 3,405 British officers, or 161,908 in all, costs a third more than that of France, though less than half as numerous. France contains thirty millions of people, the Bengal presidency close on fifty. The sea-borne commerce of India is worth above thirty millions sterling. She draws seven and a half millions of imports from, and sends nearly a similar amount of exports to, England. Eight thousand square-rigged vessels reach and quit her three principal shipping ports annually, bringing or bearing with them above a million of tons of merchandize, and receiving above two millions sterling annually of freight; with

early 100,000 country craft of a burthen of about a million and a half tons.

#### NATURAL PRODUCTS AND MANUFACTURES.

This mighty country yields, or may be made to yield, every variety of produce made use of in manufactures. It rests on the East and West, on vast regions of volcanoes; on the North it is walled in by ridges of rock salt. Its soil abounds in Soda, and supplies Nitre for the world. The alum stones of Cutch, in the Punjab, are inexhaustible. Even minerals of the most trifling apparent value yield sums that are enormous; the Wells of Rangoon produce 90,000 tons of mineral oil annually, which at a shilling a hundred weight, realises £90,000: a single mountain in Bengal sends forth £80,000 worth of Mica every season, and the Chinese purchase £10,000 worth every year of the cut Agates and Jaspers of the Rajpeepla Hills, though the produce is now reduced to a fraction of what it was wont to be; so plentiful are the stones deemed precious in England, that the finest heliotropes unworked, are sold in the Bombay Bazaar for twenty shillings a hundred weight.

The Koh-i-noor, now allowed to be a fragment of a diamond still more magnificent and its sister in splendour, and almost its rival in size—the Darya-i-noor, each reckoned worth a king's ransom,—are the produce of its mines, which so far as we know may still contain gems as magnificent as any they have rendered up. Iron and coal, the more homely, but to man the much more valuable products of the earth, are abundant: the latter seems restricted to a limited locality, the former is universal. The vegetable and animal are still more magnificent than the mineral products of India. The Palm in all its glorious forms; the Teak, the Tamarind, the Banian, and a thousand other trees, fringe its sea-board; the Acacia covers the most rainless of its plains, and the magnificent Deodar, prince of pines, with a girth of from fifteen to twenty feet, and an altitude of two hundred, clothes, with its kindred, its mountain lands, from a height of six to twelve thousand feet. Its Indigo or Sapanwood, and other dye-stuffs, supply the markets of the world. Not less famous are its gums and gum resins and its other drugs, than are its dyes; and most wonderful of all, from the white poppy alone a milky juice is drawn by manual labour, drop by drop, which yields

six and a half millions pound weight of opium, and produces a revenue to Government of upwards of three millions sterling a year. The animal creation presents representatives of every living thing moving on the earth or in the waters, from the huge leviathan found in multitudes in its seas, the elephant, the lion, the tiger, and the monkey, to the beetle and the ant levelling forests through which the strongest and most ferocious have failed to make their way. Whales abound on its shores, drawing after them fleets of American whalers, and the fins of the sharks which pursue and destroy them, exported for the use of the gourmards of China, realize in their raw state from £30,000 to £40,000 a year.

Its indigenous manufactures, now fast hastening to decay, were once on a scale of magnificence worthy of its raw produce. The correct forms of ships—only elaborated within the past ten years by the science of Europe—have been familiar to India for ten centuries; and the vessels which carried peacocks to Ophir for king Solomon, were probably the same as the fishing craft of the present day, which furnish the models the American and English clipper and yacht builders are aspiring after. The carving of its woodwork, the patterns, colours, and texture of its carpets, shawls and scarfs, admired for centuries, have, since the Great Fair of the world been set forth as patterns for the most skilled artificers of Europe to imitate. From the looms of Dacca went forth those wonderful tissues that adorned the noblest beauties of the Court of Augustus Cæsar, bearing in the eternal city the same designation sixteen centuries ago as that by which cotton is still known in India; and the abundance of Roman coins and relics up to our time occasionally exhumed, yet preserve traces of the early commercial connection between the two most wonderful nations in the world—those of the Cæsars and the Moguls. The rarest gifts Bengal could offer its native princes or its foreign conquerors, were the muslins known as “the running water,” or “the nightly dew,”—being when wet scarcely distinguishable from either; and since the advent of the English, a single piece, twenty yards in length, and one and a quarter in breadth, weighing no more than fourteen ounces, has been sold for twenty-five pounds,—a sum equal to the requital of three Dacca spinners and weavers for a twelvemonth.



The elaborate stone carving of Central India, Rajpootana and Gozerat; the embossed and enriched silver work of Cutch and Agra; the microscopic paintings of Delhi and Lahore; the carvings in sandal wood, and the filligree of Trichinopoly; the inlaid work of Mooltan and Bombay are up to this hour the marvels of the world.

The most singular monuments of Indian art can only be seen in the country; and amongst a people at once eminently devotional and martial, temples, tombs, fortresses, palaces, and weapons of war, supply subjects of special wonder. The Hills of Western India, over the space of five thousand square miles, are penetrated by hundreds of caves, approaching in size, in richness and beauty of architectural decoration, the finest cathedrals in Europe. These have been hewn out in absence of the aid of gunpowder, and fashioned without natural adjunct or addition of masonry, into their present form, covered with rich and elaborate sculptures by the hand of man. The caves are grouped together so as to furnish places of worship, halls of instruction, and domiciles for the professors and their pupils, exactly on the plan of the universities which came into existence in Europe two thousand years after those of India were forgotten; indicating an amount of civilization and demand for knowledge in the East twenty-four centuries ago, such as scarcely exists in these regions in modern times. Or passing down to a later age, there is the huge mountain of Aboo, 5000 feet high, covered and surmounted by one vast mass of temples, constructed from the seventh century of our era down to the present date. The hills of Paulitana, are literally crusted over with temples of the finest arabesque, cut in the hardest stone. The ruined city of Beejapoor contained sixteen hundred mosques. The dome of the Mausoleum of Ibrahim Adil Shah, is a third larger than that of St. Paul's: the mosque to which it belongs is 450 feet in length and 150 in breadth: while the Taj-Mahal of Agra, the monument erected by the Emperor Jehangeer over his wife, the "light of the harem," built of the purest white marble, and inlaid with the richest mosaic, stands unrivalled amongst the Mausoleums of the world.

As for weapons of war, the cannon of India could have taken in and discharged the largest sixty-eight pounders of modern warfare,

were the trunions knocked off. The gun at Moorshedabad is seventeen feet long, with a bore of eighteen inches ; that of Dacca twenty-two feet long, with a bore of fifteen inches,—it weighed twenty-one tons, and threw shot of four hundred weight. The great gun at Agra is a brass fifteen-hundred-pounder, twenty-three inches bore—it weighs eleven tons, and is worth five thousand pounds as old metal : while two out of half a dozen of large guns at Beejapoor threw shot of half a ton and a *ton and a quarter* respectively. The damask rifles and damask sword blades of Goozerat beat anything Europe can boast of ; and the wootz steel, from which these are manufactured, is deemed so excellent in England as to be used mainly for surgical instruments. The ruins of desolate cities point to the greatness of the Empire before Europeans sought its shores as traders, and seized its soil as conquerors. Gour, the former capital of Bengal, covers an area of seventeen square miles, and once boasted of a population of above a million of inhabitants. Beejapoor while flourishing contained nearly a million of inhabited houses, occupied by more than three millions of people. Rajmahal, the city of a hundred Kings, is now a miserable village inhabited by a few paper-makers. Mandoo, the capital of the Patan sovereigns of Malwa, surrounded by a wall twenty-eight miles in circuit, occupies an area of twelve thousand English acres : the Jummah Musjid, built of white marble, is the finest specimen of Affghan architecture in existence : it now supplies the lair of the wolf and the tiger : Bhali-bibura, in Kattiwar, Behut in the Northern Doab, Lamkassa at the base of the Himalayas, Palibothra near Patua on the Ganges, and Camouj in the province of Agra, have scarce left sufficient traces behind them to mark their boundaries.

#### PUBLIC WORKS.

The irrigation of the country, so long neglected by the British Government, and from which such magnificent results have within the last twenty years been derived, was an object of anxiety to the rulers of India five centuries ago. The Emperor Feroze constructed about the year 1350 a magnificent canal, for the purposes of irrigation, from the base of the mountains to the neighbourhood of Delhi, two hundred miles in length, by means of which a vast tract of country was made fertile as a garden, and above a million of people provided

with bread. Two centuries after this, the illustrious Akbar devoted himself to the construction of new canals for the purpose of irrigation, and the clearing out of those formed by his predecessors, and which had fallen into decay. He made the subject a regular part of the system of government, and left a canal act behind him, which has come down to our times, providing for a complete series of arrangements and a large array of officers for their extension and management. The Shah Jehan, seventy years later, took up with enthusiasm the plans of his predecessor, and was nobly seconded in his efforts by Ali Murdan Khan, celebrated over the East for his skill and taste in architecture. The success of their labours was magnificent; tradition still enlarges on the vastness of the returns derived from the canals brought into existence by them, which were such as from a single canal to pay for the maintenance of twelve thousand horsemen. The permanent establishment maintained for police purposes, consisted of five hundred horsemen, and a thousand footmen, armed. It is mentioned by Ferishta that during the earlier of these excavations, vast collections of giants' bones were discovered, and in our time the extension of the canal system in the same quarter has disclosed in these, the skeletons of numberless extinct animals; the Mammoth and Mastodon, the Bramatherium, and Sevatherium, and the other kindred contributions, which Colvin, Durand, Cautley, and Falconer, have made to our Indian palaeontology. Our first canal operations commenced little more than thirty years ago, and in 1821, the waters which had five centuries before been made to visit the city of Delhi, were after fifty years suspension re-introduced through their former channels.

From the Junna canal, now in use, Government derives a revenue of £25,000 a year from a total investment of £90,000; from the Western Junna canal an investment of £140,000, a direct revenue of £44,000 a year arises. Lands previously comparatively barren are maintained in a state of constant productiveness for a water rent of a shilling an acre. The population maintained in the irrigated districts is very nearly double, mile for mile, of that of those not irrigated. A careful computation made by authority shows, that in the famine year of 1837, the gross value of the saving effected by the eastern Junna Canal, was half a million sterling; one tenth of this being revenue, or fifty thousand pounds, direct gain to the public treasury.

The united Jumna Canals saved at the same period, above two millions sterling to the Common-wealth. On the Canals in the North West Provinces, completed between 1821 and 1848, Government expended £557,000, and drew in direct Canal revenue £546,000. By this an area of nearly 1,300,000 acres of ground previously sterile, have been made to yield produce worth two and a half millions annually, and to support upwards of six hundred thousand human beings. The Sutledge Canal now in progress is expected to water 624,000 acres, and to yield government a revenue of £55,447, on an expenditure of a quarter of a million, or nearly twenty per cent. It has been estimated by the Bengal Engineers, that water and land available for the purpose of irrigation in these neighbourhoods would, on an expenditure of two millions, afford a permanent return of £578,150 annually, or close on thirty per cent., and that a surface of nearly nine millions of acres, or above ten thousand square miles, might thereby be brought into cultivation. The present Governor-General most strongly recommended the Court of Directors to borrow for such improvements as these, so long as money could be had at five per cent, and made to realise from fifteen to forty. *In place of acting on counsel so judicious, the Court have directed the most stringent retrenchments to be made; any surplus that may accrue to be applied to the liquidation of their debts—they have not even left the returns on existing canals to be expended on others; and the intervention of private enterprise is out of the question where nothing can be done without the sanction of government, and government takes five years to answer a letter.* The most magnificent of all the works of this sort is the Grand Ganges Canal, navigable for nearly 960 miles, and on which a million and a quarter is proposed to be sunk. It is expected to yield a return of £400,000 a year, of which £180,000 will be direct revenue: it will fertilise no less than five millions and a half of acres of land now in a state of comparative sterility—increase the gross produce by upwards of seven millions sterling annually in value, and relieve a population, of above six millions, of all fear of those frightful famines by which the country was wont to be decimated;—yet millions on millions might be expended on irrigation in India with assurances of profit equal to what they afford.

The principal canal for watering the Barce Doab will leave the Ravee some miles from Shahpore, following the line of the highest level, right through the centre of the Doab, and will rejoin the river about sixty miles above Mooltan, a little above its junction with the Chenaub. Two branches will flow off from the main trunk to the south, both limited by the Sutlej, one watering the country in the direction of the Sobraon, the other in that of Kusoor; one branch to the north irrigates the land around Lahore, and so along to the southward of the Ravee between the river and the main canal. The length of the trunk and its branches is no less than 450 miles, and it will serve the purposes both of navigation and irrigation. The work will cost, it is believed, half a million sterling: it will irrigate about 545,000 acres at present in a state of complete sterility. It will cost for its maintenance about £20,000 a year, and yield a free return of £120,000, or twenty-four per cent on outlay after meeting all charges,—thus repaying the cost within five years, and leaving us a clear increase of £120,000 on our revenue from this single department.

The Madras Government has within these six years spent thirteen lakhs of rupees (£130,000) on works of irrigation on the Godavery, and have already received twenty lakhs (£200,000) in direct return in the shape of increase of land revenue. Of course at the outset, while the works were in progress, the receipts were inconsiderable. The average revenue for a period of six years before the work began was nineteen lakhs—it is now thirty lakhs of rupees (£300,000): so that a third more than the entire original outlay having been already refunded to the treasury, Government will hereafter draw from the improved districts ten lakhs a year, or two-thirds of the whole sum originally expended, of net increase of revenue. The increase of the land tax is a small fraction of the actual gain: the native goods exported by sea from the irrigated districts sprung up at once from seven (£70,000) their previous average, to thirteen (£130,000) lakhs; and though the tremendous floods of 1849 reduced them, they now promise to maintain themselves at above fourteen lakhs (£140,000). Before this much could be contributed to the public purse, at least five times as much must have been taken out of the soil by the cultivators,—expended probably on their own sustenance,

partly devoted to the purchase of such luxuries as they could not previously afford, and in part it is to be hoped set aside as accumulated capital, but all constituting the solid and substantial wealth of the State. We probably do not overrate the fruits of the expenditure of thirteen lakhs (£130,000) at a half million sterling annually in all—representing, at five per cent, a permanent capital of ten millions added to the value of our empire; or a return of four hundred per cent, annually on the adventure. Talk of improving a country by railways requiring a guarantee for their construction of five per cent, the longest of which will scarcely penetrate so far into the interior as the length of some of our arid river deltas!—where the productive lands, or lands capable of being rendered such, abut on the sea shore, or are penetrated by navigable streams, and which in either case provide water-carriage, so that the produce may be transported from the fields where it grows to a place of shipment. Talk of California—with its countless robberies and murders, its weekly conflagrations, its universal rapine and brutality—yielding wealth such as the diggings of a single delta supply, with twenty deltas on our hands yet unexplored.

This is no case of conquest or of rapine—of dominions ravished, through violence and deluges of blood, from the hands of their original possessors. No question of right can ever be raised—no claim of compensation or groan of grievance emitted. No people have been coerced or enslaved—no native nobility reduced or expatriated: our grounds of congratulation are genuine as they are unalloyed, the only thing we have to blush for is, that we should so long have neglected these, and still neglect seizing other, sources of wealth so enormous—of good so unalloyed.

Our wants at the outset are most moderate—all we desire is investigation: we have a noble corps of engineers to rely upon—we have scores and scores of other officers capable of acting as surveyors almost as efficiently as engineers, and hundreds on hundreds of European soldiers willing and able to share in the more laborious and less intellectual parts of the toil. All we want to begin with is a survey of, and report on, every river delta in India: for Madras this has been accomplished; in Bombay it yet requires to be begun. With estimates of the outlay and return once before us, Government

has only to select the improvement to be begun with,—or if too timid to attempt to improve the revenues of the country, to place their improvement within the reach of those willing to undertake it. Even in the midst of universal distrust, roguery, and mismanagement, it would not be a very difficult matter to induce capitalists at home to embark in enterprises assuring them of a twenty per cent return, and leaving about as much more to be acquired by the rulers of the land, who would in this case have so kindly and cordially at least consented to allow their dominions to be improved but that the interminable delays of correspondence intervene.

#### COST OF THE CHIEF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES OF INDIA.

The Government of India consists of two divisions, the Court of Directors and the Board of Control in England, and the Supreme and Local Governments, the India House and Board of Control in India: the principal part of it is at home, and this again is divided in two. In the hands of the Board of Control rests absolutely and entirely the administration of Indian affairs, it consists of a President and Secretaries, two members of the Administration,—the first receiving £3,500 a year, the others £1,500 each—all selected without the slightest consideration of their knowledge of the affairs of India; their average tenure of office for the last thirty years having been about twenty-seven months at a time, and some score of permanent irresponsible clerks, on whom they must be absolutely dependent for information and counsel. The cost of the establishment amounts to about £25,000 a year.

The Court of Directors, in whose name the country is governed, consists of twenty-four gentlemen—six of whom go out of office annually, to return to it next year. They exercise the entire initial patronage in sending out young men to India; in seniority services, mediocrity or dulness rising as rapidly as merit, or more so if they be helped by interest which the others are without. The patronage the Directors exercise in India is limited and, like that which they influence, which is extensive, is generally mis-used. The Court of Directors have not one particle of power in the administration of affairs conducted in their name, when they differ from the Board of Control, though the charges of the India

House amount to from a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year,—their dinner bills for the past eighteen years being set down in the accounts as an extra item of £53,000!

The Indian part of the administration is conducted by a Governor-General and Council, with Governors and Councils at Madras and Bombay; a Governor without a Council for Bengal, and another for the North West Provinces. The Punjab is managed by a Board of Administration; Scinde, and British Burmah, by individual Commissioners. The Governors, supreme and subordinate, are appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Control or Ministers of the day, though the nomination *pretends* to emanate from the Court of Directors. The Governor-General has generally secured some distinction before his appointment, but this by no means invariably happens, and the most commonplace and mediocre men are occasionally deemed perfectly qualified for the most important and lucrative appointment under the Crown. For the Governors of the minor Presidencies, and for all the Commanders-in-Chief, no qualification whatever is deemed requisite—interest suffices for all, and industry and exertion on the spot are occasionally regarded by the nominees just as superfluous as previous qualification. The Governors without councils, and the Commissioners, are appointed by the Governments of India from distinguished members of the public service, and the country under them has been found well managed in proportion as they have been left unrestricted. The Councils—consisting in one case of five, and in the two others of three, members, of whom in all cases the Commander-in-Chief is one—are nominated by the Court of Directors, and being for the most part selected from the Secretariat, always filled with the *élite* of the service, are generally men of ability,—with the exception of the Commander-in-Chief, who may be so or not just as it happens. He is generally worn out with age, and almost always devoid of experience: fortunately he for the most part spends the bulk of his time at a distance from the Presidency—rarely entering the council-room.

The emoluments of these functionaries are as follows:—Governor-General £24,000 and five Councillors £9,600 each, (20) Secretaries, amongst them £73,068; Governor-General's office and establishment £15,231; expense of visiting the Upper Provinces £53,252;—making the general charge of the Supreme Govern-



ment £206,771. This takes no account of the Commander-in-Chief, except in his civil capacity of councillor. The Government of Bengal costs £432,970; and £103,715 is set down for public offices at the Presidency. Bombay charges, to which those of Madras closely correspond, consist of salaries to the Governor £12,000 and three Councillors £6,000 each; Governor's office establishment £9,977; Governor's tour in the Deccan £2,399. Public offices at the Presidency and in Scinde £70,124; Miscellaneous charges £15,265; so that the total charges of the Bombay Government and Secretariate establishment alone, exceed a hundred and thirty thousand pounds a year. The Governor of Bombay's pleasure tours to the Hill station of Mahabuleshwur, and his country residence at Dapoorie, courteously termed his visit to the Deccan, costs it would appear close on £2,400 a year; and the charges under this head during the present administration exceed £12,000—or about the sum assigned annually for the whole educational purposes of the Presidency.

Some idea of the cost of Governments without councils may be formed from that of the North West Provinces, set down at something under £10,000 a year. The Board of Administration for the Punjab, including all expenses, costs under £54,000 a year; and the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Scinde, including establishments and contingencies, manage that province for about £10,000 a year.

It was admitted by the majority of witnesses examined before the Parliamentary Committee last Session, that councils at the minor Presidencies were wholly superfluous, and that competent Governors, without Councils, would manage infinitely better than with them: and it was openly or tacitly allowed on nearly all hands, that they were maintained mainly to enable the Ministry of the day to confer from time to time a gift of £60,000, (the emoluments of a five years' administration) taken from the treasury of India, with a further sacrifice for councillorships—maintained to permit of the appointment of incompetent Governors of £36,000 a year,—on any of their personal or political friends.

But monstrous as is this piece of extravagance, it is exceeded by the lavishness by which Commanders-in-Chief are required. These officers invariably belong to the Queen's service, and are in the

majority of cases *effete septuagenarians*, to whom no one would commit the drill of a militia corps. Sir Richard Armstrong, Commander-in-Chief at Madras, requires to be carried about in an easy chair. The faculties of Sir John Grey, late Commander-in-Chief of Bombay, were so far gone that he forgot the names of his own aides-de-camp, and never could be made to comprehend when he should write his name at length,—when only put his initials, to a document. The rule as to antiquity, is not however absolute: and the seniority system is made occasionally to bend in favour of a “pet officer.” Sir William Gomm was at the bottom of the list of Lieutenants General when the baton of authority was conferred on him,—much junior to the Commanders-in-Chief of Bombay and Madras, the former of whom, Sir Willoughby Cotton, resigned his command in consequence. Sir Hugh Gough had not been two months Lieutenant-General at all when he was appointed to the Madras command in June 1841; and when he had held this two years and two months, he was in August 1843 raised to supreme authority, though junior to Sir Thomas MacMahon, the Bombay Commander-in-Chief, to make room for the Marquis of Tweeddale, on whom it had been determined to confer the office both of Governor and Commander-in-Chief. Not one of the present Commanders-in-Chief, of whom the youngest, however, is allowed to be a man of ability, when appointed to commands in India, had ever been in the country, or could know anything of its geography, its climate, its people, its languages, its religions, or its government; or had ever seen a native soldier when placed over sepoy armies numbering close on three hundred thousand men, with seven thousand English officers; many of the officers men of great experience and the highest talent, few of them beyond the prime of life, and possessed of all the qualifications for those highest commands they are prevented by the injustice of their country from filling, of which those placed over them are for the most part conspicuously devoid.

The Commander-in-Chief in India receives £8,000 a year as his military salary, and £10,000 as member of council: the Commanders-in-Chief at the minor Presidencies receive half these sums, in each of these capacities, besides having all their travelling, personal, and other charges defrayed by the state,—these amongst them amounting to about half their salaries; the three very old gentlemen costing

the country altogether somewhere about fifty thousand a year. The Commander-in-Chief of India, rarely crosses the threshold of the council room, unless when sworn in, and pockets in the course of his five years' administration £50,000 for his services as councillor, it not being *possible* for him, residing as he does a thousand miles from the council room, to perform one atom of councillor's service: and the Commanders-in-Chief at the minor presidencies are very nearly in the same position. If they do sometimes enter the Council Chamber when the agreeable nature of the weather induces them to remain at the seat of government, the value of their services is on these occasions quite on a par with those of the Commander-in-Chief of India.

Lord Keane proceeded for Afghanistan in November, 1838, and returned to the presidency in February 1840: during these sixteen months he received £8000 as member of council Bombay,—above £5000 as Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army, and £600 for house rent; besides his field allowances, prize money, and other contingencies, as Commander of the Armies of Afghanistan, and the reward afterwards of a Peerage and a Pension of £2000 a year for himself and his descendants for two generations. Sir Hugh Gough was about this time still more fortunate. He had just been relieved from the command of the forces at Madras, by the arrival of Sir Samuel Whittington in January 1841, when he was placed in charge of the expedition to China in the following March. By the demise of the officer just named he was appointed Commander-in-Chief and Member of Council for Madras in June, and from this time until September 1842 he received £8000 as Member of Council; having never during all this time been within two thousand miles of the Council Chamber. He drew besides £5000 as Commander-in-Chief, £600 as house rent, and the field and other allowances, the prize money, etcetera, as Commander of the Chinese expedition. He was subsequently rewarded by a baronetcy. In July 1843 the Marquis of Tweeddale was appointed Governor of Madras; and as his interest at the Horse Guards was unbounded, it was determined that he should have the appointment of Commander-in-Chief as well as that of Governor, an arrangement permitted by the retirement of Sir Jasper Nichols from sheer old age, from supreme command, to which Sir Hugh Gough was promoted. In the course of the present Charter

Act, close on half a million will have been expended,—£10,000 annually for twenty years, on the Commander-in-Chief of India, and half that sum for each of the other Commanders-in-Chief—or £400,000 in all, on civil services by Commanders-in-Chief which it was utterly impossible for them ever to have rendered.

Now the people of England have a perfect right to dispose of their own money as they think fit, and if they choose to bestow on any piece of antique military mediocrity with friends at Court, a yearly stipend double of the whole official allowances of the late Duke of Wellington, no one has any right to complain; but it is not very worthy conduct on the part of a great nation to waste in a pitiable fashion like this, taxes raised from the earnings of fifty millions of poor native wretches living in huts not fit for an English pigsty, and whose average income falls short of three pence a day.

With administrations costing such an enormous amount of money with which, even as matters now stand, men of experience and ability are in the majority of cases entrusted, and for which the first administrative talent in the country can always be secured, it might be supposed that the less interference there was allowed from home the better, and that the Governments of India might, like those of Her Majesty's Colonies, be left to do their own work in their own way. Nothing in the world can be more remote from fact, and a Governor-General who in salary, travelling charges, and office allowances, costs the country £70,000 a year, is treated exactly as if he were the head clerk over the old factory at Fort William, in charge of prints and piece goods, and not at all above cribbing a piece of calico from his employers should it fall in his way! Every step he takes must be explained to the people at home; a copy of every letter he writes or receives, or minute he makes, must be sent to London. A detailed narrative of everything that is said, written, or done, by the Supreme or Subordinate Governments, must be forwarded home to be commented on or criticised by "the clever Clerks" of Cannon Row or Leadenhall Street, who hold the nominal rulers of India in the most absolute subjection to their pens. So frightful is the minuteness insisted on that it becomes physically impossible for these gentlemen to peruse the documents on which they are supposed to decide. The papers sent by the Cape occupy close on 200 folio volumes annually of from 500 to 1000 pages: and a single revenue

despatch is quoted by a late President of the Board of Control as having 45,000 pages of accompaniments! The from-ship-to-ship despatches of the Bombay Government will annually print out to 60 volumes of 1,500 pages folio—or as much as would make 240 vols. 8vo. of ordinary sized print!

#### CHANGES IN THE STATE OF INDIA SINCE 1833.

A general view has been given at the outset of the countries and interests for which Parliament is about to legislate, by once more re-enacting the Bill of '33, which, in all its essential particulars was a repetition of that of 1784. Why, in the course of the last eighteen years the changes that have occurred in the East are so stupendous as of themselves to demand a total alteration of the law. Since 1834, we have added the Punjaub, Scinde, Sattara, and Pegu, to our dominions, and the addition of the rest of Burmah, if not of the whole Peninsula, is inevitable. We have ravaged Affghanistan, disarmed Gwalior, and made young Holkar half a British Prince; and seem likely to annex Oude, the Nizam's and the Guicowar's dominions, almost immediately.\* The reigning sovereign of Travancore—a high caste and orthodox Hindoo—has the Bible read in all the schools in his dominions,—the liberality and enlightenment of his administration in this and other matters putting that of the British Government to shame. Steam communication has come into existence, and diminished the distance betwixt India and England to one-third of what it was in 1834, measuring the interval by time. Communications formerly conveyed, irregularly and uncertainly, on an average of about a hundred days, now pass with perfect punctuality once a fortnight in an average of twenty-eight days, which before five years are out will be reduced to twenty; and long before 1874 arrives we shall have the Electric Telegraph conveying intelligence instantly to all parts of India. Since 1834 the press has been liberated, and newspapers, till then in a state of most slavish degradation, now enjoy more freedom in India than in England: are conducted with as much pro-

\* "I cannot conceive it possible for any one to dispute the policy of taking advantage of any just opportunity for consolidating the territories that already belong to us, by taking possession of States which may lapse in the midst of them."—*The Marquis of Dalhousie* in 1848.

priety and independence; and would, but for the monstrous system prevailing around, have been productive of as great benefit to the state. The value of our commerce has been tripled, and the number of European merchants residing in India quadrupled; while a perfect net work of steam communication connects the chief ports of India with those of the whole South Eastern Ocean. Joint Stock Banks, deemed dangerous to the state twenty years ago, are now prevalent everywhere; and the education of the natives, the very idea of which filled Leadenhall Street with alarm, is now a recognized portion of our system. The Missionaries give the following abstract of the stupendous results of their labours accomplished within the past twenty years,—results destined to be immeasurably outdone in the twenty to which we now look forward:—

“At the commencement of the year 1852, there were labouring throughout India and Ceylon the agents of 22 Missionary Societies. These include 443 missionaries, of whom 48 are ordained natives; together with 698 native catechists. These agents reside at 313 missionary stations. There have been founded 331 native Churches, containing 18,410 communicants, in a community of 112,191 native Christians. Missionaries maintain 1,317 Vernacular Day Schools, containing 47,504 boys, together with 93 boarding schools, containing 2,414 Christian boys. They also superintend 126 superior English Day Schools, and instruct therein 14,562 boys and young men. Female education embraces 347 Day Schools for girls, containing 1,159 scholars; but hopes more from its 102 girls’ boarding schools containing 2,779 Christian girls. For the good of Europeans 71 services are maintained. The entire *Bible* has been translated into *ten* languages, the New Testament into *five* others, and separate gospels into *four* others. Besides numerous works for Christians, 30, 48, and even 70 *Tracts* have been prepared in these different languages suitable for Hindus and Mussulmans. Missionaries maintain in India *twenty-five* printing establishments. This vast missionary agency costs £178,000 annually, of which one-sixth, or £33,500, is contributed by European Christians resident in the country. By far the greater part of this agency, it is stated, has been brought into operation during the last twenty years. Bengal Proper, has 89 missionary stations, 103 missionaries, 130 native catechists, and 14,775 native Protestant Christians, of whom 3,500 are communicants. It has 140 Vernacular schools containing 6,470 boys, and 22 boarding schools with 790 boys, and 22 English schools giving tuition to 6,005 boys. It has also 24 day schools for girls, containing 659 pupils, and 29 boarding schools with 830 girls. Madras is far in advance of Bengal, even when we include the North West provinces with the latter. There they have 121 missionary stations, 179 missionaries, 405 catechists, and 76,591 native Christians. In the educational branch they are just as far ahead having

849 vernacular schools, with 24,445 boys and other seminaries in proportion."

The *Friend of India* thus sums up the prospects that await us :—

"No arrangement should be made by Parliament for the general or the subordinate Government without bearing distinctly in mind that within five years from the present time, the whole of India will be united by a net work of electric telegraphs, which will entirely alter the character and complexion and the exigencies of the administration. The government about to be conferred on India should be suited by anticipation to the coming age of electric speed. When there is a daily communication between the most distant provinces in the empire and the central authority, when throughout India, the references which are made in the morning will be answered before the evening, and the business of the day will be completed within the day, the Governor-General and his Council will be almost as intimately informed of all proceedings at the distant presidencies as they now are of those in Calcutta. The telegraph will communicate such an impulse to the movements of the whole machine of Government, and bring the minor presidencies so constantly under the eye of the head of the Government, that the old lumbering councils at Bombay and Madras, consisting of four members, will be altogether out of date. We vote the councils to the tomb of the Capulets. They keep up, it is said, the traditions of Government. They cannot too soon become traditions themselves. Of the three objections which were raised against the change, not one is insuperable; the first was, that there had always been a council, but this objection will cease as soon as the council is abolished; the second, that there was a Supreme Court at those presidencies, and it required a council to prevent its damaging the Company's Government, but the element of antagonism which is assumed to belong to a Crown Court may be neutralised by amalgamating it with the Sudder Court, and making the same judge preside in both. The third was, that there was a separate army, and that it was therefore necessary that there should be a council, and that the Commander-in-Chief should sit at it, though the Commander-in-Chief at these presidencies never does attend the council except to be sworn in and be enabled to sign a bill for £833 a month. We are not sufficiently acquainted with the organization of the army to be able to point out the mode in which this objection could be obviated, but we will engage to find a dozen able men in the army who could. But this difficulty should not be allowed to stand in the way of bestowing on the minor presidencies, the inestimable boon of an administration vested in the best man whom the public service can supply, and totally unfettered by venerable and traditional councils whom the Governor may at any time overrule."—*Friend of India*, December 23.

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ERRATUM.—In No. II. "Finances of India," page 14, line 10, for "are double," read "are equal to."

# INDIA REFORM.

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No. IV.

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## THE NATIVE STATES OF INDIA.

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"I WOULD sacrifice Gwalior, or any frontier of India, ten times over, in order to preserve our character for scrupulous good faith."—*The Duke of Wellington* in 1802.

"Where there is a total failure of Heirs, it is probably more consistent with right that the people should elect a sovereign, than that the principality should lapse to the Paramount State; that State, in fact, having no rights in such a case, but what it assumes by virtue of its power."—*Lord Metcalfe*, in 1837.

"I cannot for a moment admit the doctrine, that, because the view of policy upon which we have formed engagements with Native Princes may have been by circumstances, materially altered, we are not to act scrupulously up to the terms and spirit of those engagements."—*The Earl of Auckland*, in 1838.

"I cannot conceive it possible for any one to dispute the policy of taking advantage of any just opportunity for consolidating the territories that already belong to us, by taking possession of States which may lapse in the midst of them; for thus getting rid of these petty intervening principalities which may be made a means of annoyance, but which can never, I venture to think, be a source of strength for adding to the resources of the public treasury, and for extending the uniform application of our system of government to those whose best interests, we sincerely believe, will be promoted thereby."—*The Marquis of Dalhousie*, in 1848

INCLUDING in the term British India, all the territories over which the British Government exercises direct authority, legal control, military protection, or political influence, the country so designated may be roughly estimated to contain an area of 1,300,000 square miles, and to be inhabited by 150 millions of people. Of that great area, however, not one half is immediately subject to the administration of the East India Company. For the Native Princes of India still rule, with more or less power, over possessions occupying 717,000\* of these 1,300,000 square miles. But this moiety of the surface contains only one-third of the entire population, or some 53 millions of inhabitants. These native Principalities sometimes consist of great blocks of country, situate in the most fertile and desirable portions of India, as the Deccan, Mysore and Berar in the South—Oude and Nepaul towards the North-West and North—Guzerat in the West; where Governments of considerable pretensions and strength still survive. Or of confederacies or congeries of smaller States lying

\* These, and the figures which follow, are taken from the *Statistical Papers, relating to India*, recently "printed for the Court of Directors of the East India Company," and since ordered for its use by the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Bright.

little for no cotton. Over five of them, the British Government has the right, in case of misrule, of assuming the management of their internal affairs—viz. Cochin, Mysore,\* Berar, Oude, and Travancore. But Cutch, Guzerat, Gwalior, the Deccan, and Indore, are not subject to any such controul. And it is only when their internal disasters are likely or certain to produce internal consequences hazardous to the general tranquillity, that any right to restore order (not to subvert the State) can accrue to the paramount power.

The protected States—the smaller and less advanced, but still more ancient subdivisions of India—are in numbers nearly 400. Generally, their chiefs are absolutely independent in matters of ordinary internal arrangement; but in some few there is a concurrent, in one or two an appellate British jurisdiction.

These States, subsidiary and protected, (including Nepal, Dholpore and Tipperah) occupy, we have said, 717,000 square miles of territory, and their population exceeds fifty-three millions. They yield a revenue of upwards of ten millions sterling a year; they (or rather such of them as are liable) pay subsidies or tribute to the British Government of one million sterling, about a tithe of their gross taxation; and—besides contingents commanded by British officers and available to the British Government of 32,000 men, for which some of them pay—their aggregate military resources comprise 12,962 artillery, 68,303 cavalry, and 317,653 infantry;—in all 398,918 men, exclusive of their contingents; a force more than 100,000 stronger in numbers than the army of the British Government in India. The military armaments of all India consist therefore, as follows:

1. Army of the British Government (Royal, European, and Native) maintained at the cost of its 100 millions of subjects	289,529
2. Native contingents commanded by British officers and available by the British Government	32,311
3. Native contingents, not so commanded, but so available	4,000
4. Armies of Native princes, many of which are at the service, when required, of the British Government, paid for by fifty-three millions of people	398,918
	<hr/> 726,758

\* Owing to the alleged incompetency of the Rajah, this right is at present exercised in Mysore.

Thus, it appears that the Native States of India, possessing only 53 millions of people, and a revenue not exceeding 10 millions sterling, maintain military establishments of their own, 435,229 strong, against the British Government's army of 289,529 men, provided for out of a net revenue of 21 millions, paid by a population of 100 millions. Of the cost of the Native Armies we know nothing. But, the burthen of so vast a force as 435,229 men, falling, as it does, on comparatively so small a population, and on States comparatively so poor, must, it is obvious, be very oppressive in its financial effects. Its direct pecuniary weight is, however, probably its least evil. For here are nearly half a million of the picked men of this population withdrawn from those industrial and intelligent pursuits which develop the resources, create the capital, and promote the improvement of a people and a country. Here is an enormous amount of taxation needful to maintain such a force, expended by these States in a manner relatively unproductive. And here are war establishments maintained in States not permitted to make war—positively prohibited from using the armies they keep up, except in their own territories, and against their own people.

No doubt, part of this great military force of the Native States is in reality Police; and the cost of that portion, whatever it may be, represents the expenses of civil administration, of the maintenance of order and tranquillity, of the enforcement of law, and the collection of revenue, rather than the burthen of military establishments unnecessarily maintained. But, a very large part cannot be so classified; and in respect of it, the population of Native Principalities would, it is obvious, be greatly benefited by a considerable reduction of their armies. The army of the Indian Government, in number 289,529, costs about twelve millions sterling. But its cost affords no means of estimating the expense of the 435,229 men to the Native Princes. Their pecuniary burthen is, of course, very much less than that of the British army. But then it falls on a population and a revenue not much more than one half that which bears the greater cost. So that, in all probability, the military expenditure of Native States is quite as oppressive, *per capite*, as the military expenditure of the Indian Government.

Now, as we are masters of India in consequence of, and maintain our supremacy over it by, our own army of 289,526 men, costing twelve millions sterling, and as by virtue of that supremacy, we have prohibited

in India all other wars than our own, this additional army of 435,229 men can only be of use so far as it promotes the good civil government of the Native States which maintain it; that is in its police capacity. As an element of warfare it is dangerous and mischievous. It would, therefore, be a wise and prudent policy in the British Government to assist the Native States in reducing this enormous force which eats up so great a part of their revenues. And this may be done in a variety of ways. First, by setting the Native Rulers the good example of peace. Next, by giving our own subjects the benefits of tranquillity in large reductions of our own military establishments. Thirdly, by relieving Native Allies from engagements to maintain for our use, when we require them, military forces. And fourthly, by allowing Native Princes to have the advantage in their domestic government of their own contingents. The two first modes involve general considerations, not necessary to pursue here; powerfully as such inducements to reduce their armies would by their influence react on Native States. The other two, however, are special, and need explanations.

In some cases, as we have already stated, Native States are required by the Indian Government to maintain large separate military forces that, in the event of war, these forces may be available to the Indian Government against what that Government deems to be their common enemy, but rather, to speak more correctly, in defence of its general supremacy. Now this obligation might be advantageously revised, insisting, of course, on a reduction of Native armies to the extent of its relaxation. Some years ago the Indian Government, in one instance, did indeed make an offer of this sort; but it was coupled with a demand for a pecuniary contribution that rendered it illusory. It was in the case of one of the Bundelcund Chiefs, the Rajah of Dutteah, who, in a well administered little territory of 850 square miles, having a population of 120,000, and a revenue of £100,000 a-year, maintains an army 6000 strong. In 1840, the Indian Government proposed to release him from the engagement under which he is bound to have that force at its disposal; but as it required, in exchange for the release, a considerable annual tribute, and wished to introduce a local force of its own into his territories, the Rajah would not pay the price or run the risk. So Dutteah still continues burthened with 6000 soldiers. To attempt reductions in this way is, of course, really to obstruct and hinder any being made; for, in this instance, the Rajah of Dutteah would have

lost his power and prestige in his own country had he yielded to those terms.

In some parts of India there are, no doubt, special reasons for encouraging the military spirit of Native States, as in Rajpootana; whence good faith and a little generosity on our part could always, in times of danger, draw powerful military assistance. If, remarked the late Colonel Tod, the very highest authority in every thing that respects the Rajpoot States: "If the spirit of the treaties be upheld, it is no exaggeration to say that, within a few years of prosperity, we could oppose to any enemy upon this one only vulnerable frontier at least 50,000 Rajpoots, headed by their respective princes, who would die in our defence. This is asserted from a thorough knowledge of their character and history. The Rajpoots want no change; they only desire the recognition and inviolability of their independence; but we must bear in mind that mere parchment obligations are good for little in the hour of danger. It is for others to decide whether they will sap the foundation of rule by a passive indifference to the feelings of race; or whether, by acts of kindness, generosity, and politic forbearance, they will ensure the exertion of all their moral and physical energies in one common cause with us." But even in Rajpootana the Indian Government have opportunities quite consistent with all due encouragement to Rajpoot military spirit, to lessen the burthen of military expenditure in these little States. At the head of the Rajpoot Confederacy is the Rana of Mewar or Odeypore, who still possesses "nearly the same extent of territory which his ancestors held when the Conqueror of Gluzni first crossed the blue waters of the Indus to invade India."\* He rules over a million of hardy and attached subjects, and pays, out of a revenue of only £140,000 a-year, a tribute of £26,000 to the Indian Government. His regular army consists of 1200 horse and 4200 foot. But, in addition, the Indian Government compels him to contribute a large sum annually for the maintenance of the Malwa Bheel Corps, which, though only raised for the pacification of some rude tracts in Joudpore, is still kept up long after those districts have been pacified. First, then, the Indian Government takes a tribute of £20,000 a-year from the Rana; next, it is entitled to use all his forces in case of war; and lastly, it imposes a heavy military contribution on him for purposes of its own, insisting on the

\* *Tod's Annals of Rajapootana*, vol. i. p. 212.

payment after those purposes have been realized. Here, then, there is ample opportunity for the Indian Government to mitigate the pecuniary pressure of military expenditure on this State. And well does the Rana of Odeypore merit relief at its hands. For, despite the smallness of his resources, he has spent more than a million sterling upon one great work—the magnificent lake of Rajimunder. Whilst in the last twenty years, our whole expenditure over all India, on all our public works, scarcely reaches four millions, out of the gross revenue received during the same period of above 367 millions sterling.

So also in the protected Hill and Sikh States, lying between our territories and Nepaul on the north, and between us and the Punjab on the north-west. There, too, it may be desirable to sustain the military spirit of the population. But no such motives are applicable to the Cuttuck Mehals on the south-west; where Rajahs, ruling over a population of about 700,000, maintain armies more than 60,000 strong. Nor in Bundelcund, where, besides the Legion, to which its larger princes are compelled to contribute, there are not less than 30,000 armed men in the service of the Native Princes. Here, also, the policy of our Government ought to aim at reduction of military armaments.

Much, too, might be accomplished even in the subsidiary States. Take, for example, a case in Southern India—that of the Nizam of the Deccan. The territories of this Prince extend over 96,337 square miles, and contain a population of upwards of 10 millions, paying a revenue somewhat under two millions sterling. In the first place, he is compelled to contribute to the British army a subsidiary force of 10,628 men; and, for its payment, the Northern Circars, Guntoor, and the ceded Mysore districts, (which fell by treaty to him on the destruction of Tippoo), are in possession of the Indian Government. In return for this contribution, we undertook to protect the Deccan against external enemies. But the only enemies dangerous to the Deccan, after Tippoo's death, were the Peishwa and his Mahrattas. That Prince was deposed more than 30 years ago, his country annexed to British India, and his Mahrattas are now our subjects. Nevertheless, though there are now no external enemies (ourselves excepted) to protect the Nizam against, he is still compelled to contribute this subsidiary force of 10,628 men to our Indian army. But that is not all. The Nizam is

next made to maintain a Contingent, as it was originally called, or an auxiliary force, as it is now termed, of 8,094 men, equipped after European fashion, commanded by British officers, and entirely at the disposal of the British Resident; but over this second army, the Nizam has no real power; and, in point of fact, it is a British force in the heart of his country. Nevertheless, for it he is obliged to pay. Now its cost is about £350,000 a year; and when that sum is deducted from his revenue of £1,900,000 a year, this Prince has only left £1,550,000 wherewith to discharge the general expenses, military and civil, of his government. The Nizam is then charged with two British armies:—

1 The British subsidiary force . . . . . 10,628

2 The auxiliary force . . . . . 8,094

In all, 18,722 men, from whom he derives no aid whatever in ruling his own State. To govern his 96,337 square miles of territory and his 10 millions of people, he therefore, keeps besides,

3 An Army of Irregulars . . . . . 16,890

4 A miscellaneous force of Arabs, Sikhs, }  
Patans, &c. . . . . } 9,811

or 26,701 men: not a large army, when the extent and populousness of his dominions are considered. But the consequence of nearly one-fifth of his revenue being required to pay the second British army is, that the remaining four-fifths are quite insufficient to enable him to carry on the ordinary services of his administration. Hence, the Nizam is always largely in arrear in his payments to the second British army,—that is, the auxiliary force of 8,094 men,—and to his own military establishments also. And thus the British Government has not merely pecuniary claims against him, but indulges in complaints that the affairs of the Deccan are ill administered—that it is disorganised, revolutionary, and dangerous; and, though it is expressly excluded by treaties from interference in its domestic administration, and there is evidence to show that the Nizam's subjects are happier and more prosperous than their neighbours under British rule;—the British Government threatens, as a choice of evils, to assume the management of the country. Whereas the true solution of the difficulty,—as we trust is now seen—clearly lies in a revision of the military burthens we have imposed on this Prince; inasmuch as such revision would increase the Nizam's pecuniary ability to improve his administration.



In like manner, the embarrassments of the principal subsidiary State of Western India—that of the Guicowar of Baroda, or Guzerat—arise from our military exactions. First of all we charge\* him for a subsidiary force of about 5000 men; next we compel him to keep up and maintain for our use a contingent of 3000 cavalry; and then we make him pay for 750 Irregular Horse stationed in the British district of Ahmedabad. In addition, the Guicowar is obliged to have an army of 6000 men for his own administration; besides a police corps of 4000. Thus, out of a revenue of £600,000, this Prince has to keep an armed force of 14,000 men; nearly 4000 of whom are for our, and not his, purposes. The consequence of which state of things is, that the principal anxiety of the Guicowar is to get rid of that liability; and believing in the corruptibility of the Bombay government, it is notorious he has spent large sums in bribery at Bombay with that view. Some of the intrigues and corruptions arising out of these compulsory armaments are thus referred to by Mr. Chapman in his recent pamphlet, *Baroda and Bombay, their Political Morality*.

“The Guicowar, a partner in the [banking] House in which Baba Nafra was manager, as well as sovereign of the country, was under certain treaty engagements with the British Government for the maintenance, out of his revenues, of a body of cavalry called ‘the Guzerat Irregular Horse.’ The abolition of this engagement had long been an object with the then reigning prince. \* \* \* Intrigues were, therefore, set on foot at Bombay at considerable cost, with the view to obtaining its abrogation through the corrupt favour of the several members of the Government. Motec Purshotum, whom the Guicowar believed to be secretly in favour with the members of the Government, was one of the principal agents in the business; he was sent to Bombay; Gopallrow Myrall, the virtual minister of the Guicowar, was the soul of it; Baba Nafra was also deeply concerned, and was afterwards interdicted the Residency for his share of it. The sums allotted by the bribers to the different members and officers of Government, but never alleged to have been received by them, were as follows:

To Sir James Carnac . . . . .	Rupees 1,000,000
„ Mr. Willoughby . . . . .	250,000
„ Mr. Reed . . . . .	60,000
„ Shree Crustna . . . . .	36,000
„ Dr. Brown and all the minor parties . . . . .	110,000
	<hr/>
	1,456,000

A total equivalent to £120,000.

\* It is to pay for the subsidiary force, that certain districts in Guzerat, and the Ahmedabad farm, have been ceded by the Guicowar to the British Government.

"It is extremely difficult to imagine that parties who had been so long in communication with the Government of Bombay should have ventured on an attempt of this character, of which even the machinery must have been very costly, and the danger in case of repulse or detection great, if they had not believed, from what they had seen, that, notwithstanding all the professions of the British Government, their object could really be effected by Khuptut."\*

These intrigues, carried on by a Native well known at Bombay, Dackjee Dadajee, occurred in 1843. At a later period they were renewed; but, though Col. Outram laid a mass of proof of their existence before the Bombay Government, it refused to take any steps in defence of its own honour.

The truth is, that, under our present system, the decline of a Native State dates from the moment we become closely connected with it, and this decline arises chiefly from the inordinate military establishments directly or indirectly imposed on them. Yet now that in all directions the Native States are more or less embarrassed, the doctrine of their absorption or annexation is boldly and openly preached by servants† of the Indian Government, and has been avowed and acted on by Lord Dalhousie himself. "We are Lords Paramount, and our policy is to acquire as direct a dominion over the 717,000 square miles still possessed by Native Princes, as we already have over the other half of India." This is the new law of our Indian Empire, as laid down by the present Governor-General.

Opposed to it there is, however, a succession of great authorities, all agreed on the impolicy of subverting the Native states on general principles touching our own safety. Let us listen then a little to the wisdom of men who, though dead, yet speak:—

*The Duke of Wellington.*

"In my opinion, the extension of our territory and influence has been greater than our means. Besides, we have added to the number and description of our enemies, by depriving of employment those who heretofore found it in the service of Tippoo and of the Nizam. Wherever we spread ourselves, particularly if we aggrandize ourselves

\* The word Khuptut, as here used by Mr. Chapman, means bribery.

† Particularly by Mr. Campbell, of the Bengal Civil Service, in his recent publications which, valuable for their, perhaps indiscreet, frankness, too frequently indulge in a tone of morality, popular enough in the State of Mississippi, but as yet unsanctioned by public opinion in England.

at the expense of the Mahrattas, we increase this evil; we throw out of employment and means of subsistence all who have hitherto managed the revenue, commanded, or served, in the armies, or have plundered the country. These people become additional enemies, at the same time that by the extension of our territory, our means of supporting our government and of defending ourselves are proportionally decreased."

*Sir Thomas Munro.*

"Even if all India could be brought under the British dominion, it is very questionable whether such a change, either as it regards the natives or ourselves, ought to be desired. One effect of such a conquest would be that the Indian army, having no longer any warlike neighbours to combat, would gradually lose its military habits and discipline, and that the native troops would have leisure to feel their own strength, and for want of other employment to turn it against their European masters. But even if we could be secured against every internal commotion, and could retain the country quietly in subjection, I doubt much *if the condition of the people would be better than under their native princes.* The strength of the British Government enables it to put down every rebellion, to repel every foreign invasion, and to give to its subjects a degree of protection which those of no native power enjoy. Its laws and institutions also afford them a security from domestic oppression unknown in those States; but these advantages are dearly bought. They are purchased by the sacrifice of independence, of national character, and of whatever renders a people respectable. The natives of the British provinces may, without fear, pursue their different occupations, as traders, meerassadars, or husbandmen, and enjoy the fruits of their labour in tranquillity; but none of them can aspire to anything beyond this mere animal state of thriving in peace: none of them can look forward to any share in the legislation, or civil, or military government of their country. It is from men who either hold, or who are eligible, to public office, that natives take their character; where no such men exist there can be no energy in any other class of the community. The effect of this state of things is observable in all the British provinces, whose inhabitants are certainly the most *abject*\* *race* in India. No elevation of character can be expected among men, who, in the military line, cannot attain to any rank above that of Subahdar (captain), where they are as much below an (English) ensign as an ensign is below the Commander-in-Chief; and who in the civil line can hope for nothing beyond some petty judicial or revenue office, in which they may by corrupt means make up for their slender salary. The consequence, therefore, of the

\* It is a significant coincidence to find the Report of the Commons' Committee on Indian Cotton Cultivation still using in 1848 this very term "*abject*" as descriptive of the Ryots of the British Provinces, thirty years after Sir T. Munro thus applied it.

conquest of India by the British arms would be, in place of raising, *to debase the whole people*. There is, perhaps, no example of any conquest, in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country as British India. Among all the disorders of the native states, the field is open for every man to raise himself, and hence among them, there is a spirit of emulation, of restless enterprise, and independence, far preferable to the servility of our Indian subjects. The existence of independent native states is also useful in drawing off the turbulent and disaffected among our native troops."

*Sir John Malcolm.*

"I am decidedly of opinion that the tranquillity, not to say the security of our vast Oriental possessions is involved in the preservation of the native principalities which are dependent upon us for protection. These are also so obviously at our mercy, so entirely within our grasp, that besides the other and great benefits which we derive from those alliances, their co-existence with our rule is of itself a source of political strength, the value of which will never be known till it is lost. They shew the possibility of a native State subsisting even in the heart of our own territories, and their condition mitigates in some degree the bad effects of that too general impression, that our sovereignty is incompatible with the maintenance of native princes and chiefs. \* \* \* \* \*

I am further convinced, that though our revenue may increase, the permanence of our power will be hazarded in proportion as the territories of native princes and chiefs fall under our direct rule. Considering as I do, from all my experience, that it is now our policy to maintain as long as we can all Native States now existing, and through them, and by other means to support and maintain native chiefs and an aristocracy throughout the empire of India; I do think that every means should be used to avert what I should consider as one of the greatest calamities, in a political point of view, that could arise to our empire, viz. the whole of India becoming subject to our direct rule. There are none of the latter who can venture to contend against us in the field. They are incapable from their actual condition of any dangerous combinations with each other, and they absorb many elements of sedition and rebellion. It is further to be observed on this part of the subject, that the respect which the natives give to men of high birth, with claims upon their allegiance, contributes greatly to the preservation of the general peace. Such afford an example to their countrymen of submission to the rule of foreigners—they check the rise of those bold military adventurers, with which India has, and ever will abound, but who will never have the field widely opened to their enterprises, until our impolicy has annihilated, or suffered to die of their own act, those high princes and chiefs, who, though diminished in power, have still the hereditary attachment and obedience of millions of those classes, who are from habits and courage alike suited to maintain or to disturb the public peace."

*Sir Henry Russell.*

"The danger that we have most to dread in India lies entirely at home. A well conducted rebellion of our native subjects, or an extensive disaffection of our native troops, is the event by which our power is most likely to be shaken, and the sphere of this danger is necessarily enlarged by every enlargement of our territory. The increase of our subjects, and still more of our native troops, is an increase not of our strength but of our weakness; between them and us there never can be community of feeling. We must always continue foreigners; and the object of that jealousy and dislike, which a foreign rule never ceases to excite."

And to these voices from the grave may be added authorities who, happily, are still amongst us, for our instruction and guidance.

*Mr. Elphinstone.*

"It appears to me to be our interest as well as our duty, to use every means to preserve the allied governments; it is also our interest to keep up the number of independent powers: their territories afford a refuge to all those whose habits of war, intrigue, or depredation, make them incapable of remaining quiet in ours; and the contrast of our Government has a favourable effect on our subjects, who, while they feel the evils they are actually exposed to, are apt to forget the greater ones from which they have been delivered. If the existence of independent powers gives occasional employment to our armies, it is far from being a disadvantage."

*Lord Ellenborough.*

"Our Government is at the head of a system composed of native States, and I would avoid taking what are called rightful occasions of appropriating the territories of native states; on the contrary, I should be disposed, so far as I could, to maintain the native States, and I am satisfied that the maintenance of the native States, and the giving to the subjects of those States the conviction that they were considered permanent parts of the general Government of India, would materially strengthen our authority. I feel satisfied that I never stood so strong with my own army as when I was surrounded by native Princes; they like to see respect shown to their native Princes. These Princes are sovereigns of one-third of the population of Hindostan; and with reference to the future condition of the country, it becomes more important to give them confidence that no systematic attempt will be made to take advantage of the failures of heirs to confiscate their property, or to injure in any respect those sovereigns in the position they at present occupy."

*Mr. Shepherd, an East India Director.*

"Throughout the short period of the wonderful rise of the British power in India, our Governments have adopted, generally, a system

of decided conciliation towards the native princes, chiefs, and people. The former were found the best instruments for conciliating towards us the goodwill of their subjects. We managed generally so to combine their interest with our own, that they soon perceived that the success of our Government proved the best source of benefit to themselves, and thus they became, in a manner, constituent elements of our system of Government. The language of Mr. Elphinstone was, "that the British Government is uniformly anxious to promote the prosperity of its adherents, it being a maxim of its policy that the interests of such persons should be as dear to it as its own."

"I attribute to this system the first and more early co operation of the natives generally in our progress. A perseverance in the same course of moderation and forbearance, a cautious abstaining from interference with the native religion, a scrupulous regard to the maintenance of our honour and good faith, an impartial administration of justice, and, in fact, the general kind and benevolent treatment of all classes, did not fail to win the confidence of the people at large. An immense native army, second to none in efficiency and discipline, and whose attachment and fidelity have stood the test of no ordinary temptations, have also been the fruits of this system. And at length we have the amazing spectacle of a vast country, consisting of 600,000 square miles, and containing upwards of 100 millions of inhabitants, governed through the medium of a handful of Englishmen.

"May it not be fairly questioned whether a system of universal conquest and assumption of territory would have been equally successful? and if so, whether it is prudent, even were it just, to deviate from this successful course? I am the last person to wish to derogate from the importance of 'British bayonets' in India; without them we could have neither gained, or retained, our magnificent empire. I am, however, equally persuaded that a bare dependence upon physical force, either in early or later times, although it might, no doubt, have maintained the security of our factories on the coast, and fully vindicated our national power, yet under it, the civilizing influences of the British rule could never have been extended, and the range of our cannon must have continued to be the boundaries of our territory."

*The Hon. Mr. Melville, an East India Director.*

"The supreme Government of India has declared that an adoption is of no power or effect until it has 'received the sanction of the sovereign power, with whom it rests to give or to refuse it;' and even Sir George Clerk, who declares himself in favour of recognizing the adoption, admits that an adoption is only valid if sanctioned by the paramount power; viz. the British Government. This seems the chief reason for refusing to sanction the adoption, and I must therefore examine it in some detail.

"In the first place, I think we ought to lay aside the European feudal terms, which run through the papers, of 'lord paramount' and of 'suzerain,' and of regarding Sattara as 'a fief,' as unsuited to

a question of adoption under the law and custom of India. 'Parallels of this sort rather furnish similitudes to illustrate or to adorn, than supply analogies from whence to reason.' But these terms mislead us also, by assuming the existence in India of a system of order, and of regulated right in the relation between one great Emperor and other minor sovereigns, which, I believe, never existed, and certainly not for the last century. On the contrary, any system of rights is entirely at variance with the lawlessness and anarchy which prevailed, when our political connection with India commenced. The only law then recognized was the law of the strongest. On this ground, it seems to me visionary to talk of rights held under the Emperors, or the Mahrattas, and derived by us from them.

"Nevertheless, it is stated that we are lords paramount in relation to Sattara, first, as successors to the Emperors; I have just now shown, however, I think, that there was no paramount sovereignty for us to succeed to. We have conquered a large portion of the territories which the Emperors once possessed, not from them, but from other powers who had seized them. We are thus become the predominant or paramount power in India, and able to throw our weight into the scale of justice and order when any dispute is likely to disturb the general peace. In this sense we may be said to be successors to the Emperors, but not to any constitutional prerogatives, which confer on us rights as lords paramount.

"Again, if we have any claim to succeed to such rights from the Emperor, we must either have obtained them from him by grant or treaty, or have received some formal submission from other sovereigns, or else some implied grant or submission of the kind. If so, where and when did all this occur? But there is no trace to be found of any such grant, or of any such submission; and a mere general rumour or impression, such as is described by the members of the Bombay Government, should not surely be allowed for a moment to affect that great and obvious principle of public law expressed by the writers of Europe, that "one party to a treaty cannot be allowed to introduce subsequent restrictions which he has not expressed."

#### *General Briggs.*

"If you do away with the right of adoption with respect to the Princes of India, the next question will be whether, in the case of estates which you yourselves have conferred on officers for their services, or upon other individuals for their merits, they should be allowed to adopt. Here you are treading on delicate ground. If you are to do away with the right of individuals to adopt, you will shake the faith of the people of India; you will influence that opinion which has hitherto maintained you in your power; and that influence will thrill through your army; and you will find some day, as Lord Metcalfe more than once said, 'we shall rise some morning, and hear of a conflagration throughout the whole empire of India, such as a few Europeans amongst millions will not be able

to extinguish.' Your army is derived from the peasantry of the country, who have rights; and if those rights are infringed upon, you will no longer have to depend on the fidelity of that army. You have a native army of 250,000 men to support your power, and it is on the fidelity of that army your power rests. But you may rely on it, if you infringe the institutions of the people of India, that army will sympathise with them; for they are part of the population; and in every infringement you may make upon the rights of individuals, you infringe upon the rights of men who are either themselves in the army, or upon their sons, their fathers, or their relatives. Let the fidelity of your army be shaken, and your power is gone."

But there are other reasons against this new theory of subversion, besides the advantage thus authoritatively described as resulting to our own power, and its stability, from the maintenance of Native States. We have, it is true, become the predominant power in India, but our supremacy is not without its correlative obligations and duties. On the contrary, it is a superiority limited and restricted within the stipulations and provisions, and controlled and checked by the words and language of treaties. "I would," wrote General Wellesley, half a century ago, to his more ambitious and peremptory brother, the then Governor-General,—“I would sacrifice Gwalior, or every other frontier in India ten times over, in order to preserve our character for scrupulous good faith.” “What!” he nobly asked of his relative, “what brought me successfully through the last campaign but strict adherence to British good faith; and what success could I hope for in any future operations, if I were to tarnish that faith?” Forty years passed away; but in 1842 Lord Auckland (a great offender in some respects,) still repeated the Great Duke's language: “In viewing this question,”—the right of the widow of the Rajah of Kishengur to adopt a son without authority from her deceased husband:

“I would at once put aside any reference to the prerogatives claimed and exercised by the Emperor of Delhi, or of any *supposed rights* which it has been thought might be assumed by us, because they were habitually enforced by those Sovereigns, or by others, who have at different times held supreme rule within the various provinces of the Empire. I would look only to the terms and spirit of the treaties or engagements which we have formed with the several states of India—and bring forward no other demand than such as, in reference to those engagements, may be indisputably consistent with good faith.”

Again, when an attempt was made to deprive the Rajah of Oorcha of his rights as an independent Prince, on similar grounds, Lord



Auckland, rejecting the flimsy pretences, thus grasped the substance of justice :—

“I cannot for a moment admit the doctrine that, because the view of policy upon which we may have formed engagements with Native Princes may have been by circumstances materially altered, we are not to act scrupulously up to the terms and spirit of those engagements.”

Lord Metcalfe went even further : for he argued that even in a *casus omissus*, native law and practice, and neither our supremacy nor our power, ought to prevail :—

“Where there is a total failure of heirs, it is probably more consistent with right that the people should elect a Sovereign, than that the principality should lapse to the Paramount state, that State, in fact, having no rights in such a case but what it assumes by virtue of its power.”

Lord Dalhousie, however, has reversed this sound policy. According to him, our supremacy; wherever an apology or an excuse can be raised, has to over-ride our treaties, has to interpret their language, and to decide all their difficulties; and “it is only in this way,” says his admirer, Mr. Campbell, “that we can hope gradually to extinguish the Native States which consume so large a portion of the revenue of the country,” as if they were robbing us of something we were justly entitled to.

Revenue is then the motive for this change. But revenue does not always include profit. “By incorporating Sattara with our possessions we shall increase the revenue of our State,” joyfully, if immorally, anticipated Lord Dalhousie in 1848. “We were not prepared to find that the annexation of Sattara would prove a drain on the general revenues of India,” gravely and sadly replied the Court of Directors, after four years experience of these expectations, in 1852. Nor is the loss to the general revenues of India arising from the absorption of Sattara an exceptional case. The King of Oude was formerly bound to pay us a tribute of £700,000; in lieu of it we took from him a territory yielding £1,125,000; but, after twenty years possession of it, the revenue was found to have declined at the rate of £10,000 annually; and this decline, the Court of Directors last year stated, is still going on. So, too, with Coorg—it is a loss; Scinde is a loss; the Punjaub a bottomless pit of expense.

By these annexations, however, a large body of Englishmen do, no doubt, gain. Patronage is increased, employment is increased, sala-

ies are increased; at the cost, however, of the general revenues, and of the impoverishment of the people. "Five Native States," writes Mr. Sullivan,\* "have fallen within the last ten years. If we put on one side of the account what the Natives have gained by the few offices that have been lately opened to them, with what they have lost by the extermination of these States, we shall find the net loss to be immense, and what the Native loses the Englishman gains. Upon the extermination of a Native State, an Englishman takes the place of the Sovereign, under the name of Commissioner; three or four of his associates displace as many dozen of the native official aristocracy, while some hundreds of our troops take the place of the many thousands that every Native Chief supports. The little Court disappears—trade languishes—the capital decays—the people are impoverished—the Englishman flourishes, and acts like a sponge, drawing up riches from the banks of the Ganges, and squeezing them down upon the banks of the Thames." Nor is this all. Native Princes and their Courts not only encourage native Trade and native Arts, but under them, and because of their very weakness, public spirit and opinion flourishes: all that constitutes the life of a people is strengthened; and though the Government may occasionally be oppressive, heavier far is the yoke of "our Institutions." When in Oude—where, contrary to what he was told to expect, he was surprised by finding a well cultivated country and a flourishing people, as also, we may add, did a German traveller only a year or two back—Bishop Heber asked an intelligent Native if he wished to become a subject of the British Government? His reply was—"Of all misfortunes keep me from that!"

Moreover, Lord Dalhousie's new rule "that on all occasions where heirs natural shall fail, the territory should be made to lapse," involves a complete revolution in our dealings with Native States. For hitherto the very reverse has been our policy. Down to his Vice-Royalty we not only confirmed the Hindoo practice of adoption,†

\* In his pamphlet, *Plea for the Princes of India*. Eppingham Wilson, 1853.

† It will perhaps be useful here to explain the *rationale* of the practice of adoption; and that we cannot do better than in the language of General Briggs:—"A Hindoo's land and property are equally divided amongst the children of the person dying, and would be equally divided, in case of no direct heirs, amongst all collateral heirs. But to prevent division, and, in fact, the extinction of the in-

where heirs natural failed, but we pressed and forced the practice on dying Princes even where it was indifferent to them.

In 1826 Dowlut Row Scindiah, Rajah of Gwalior, was ill and childless. Colonel Stewart, the Resident at his Court, and his assistant, passed months in urging him to adopt an heir; they reasoned, they argued, they insisted, they even annoyed and irritated the sick prince: for the pride of Scindiah had been broken. After the downfall of the Peishwa, in whose defence his sword had not been drawn, the glory of the Mahratta race was, he felt, gone, and he was no longer the same man. So, careless of the future, he repulsed all their entreaties, replying—"After my death you will be masters of every thing, and may do as you please;" in March 1827, he died, heirless. But Lord Amherst did not—as Lord Dalhousie now says we are bound in "all" such cases to do—seize on Gwalior as a "lapsed" fief. On the contrary—he disclaimed any right "to regulate the Gwalior succession;" eagerly and gracefully he recognized the boy whom Scindiah's favourite wife\* adopted after his death. The reign of the youthful Sovereign was, however, brief; he, too, died in 1842; childless also. Again the widow adopted; again her adoption was recognized by the British Government, and the adopted boy is still Rajah of Gwalior. Nor when Lord Ellenborough subsequently broke the power of the army, did he ever think of absorbing the State, though he had then a plausible excuse for extinguishing it.

As at Gwalior and with Scindiah, so at Indore and with Holkar. Mulhur Row Holkar died in 1834 without any male child. A popular movement raised Hurrce Holkar to the throne; his elevation was at once recognised by the British Government. In 1841, he was ill and childless; the Governor-General pressed him to adopt an

integrity of estates, a person is permitted to adopt out of his collateral heirs, one person to inherit the whole property. And not only is he permitted to do so; but after his death, in case of failure, his widow may: because a man in the vigour of life may be suddenly killed or taken away, without having adopted, or without the hope of having an heir of his own; and his widow is permitted in that case to adopt, in order that the estate may be preserved in its integrity and disputes at law avoided. And a very convenient thing it is."

\* In this case the right was exercised, not by the eldest, but by the second wife, who, said Scindiah to Col. Stewart, when teased about the eventualities of his succession, "was a woman of sense."

r. Unlike Scindiah, Holkar did so, and on his death, in 1844, the option was confirmed by the Paramount Power. Here also the young Rajah lived only a few months; and, in 1845, Lord Hardinge, new to Indian rule, wished to make the choice of a successor bear the appearance of a free act of grace on the part of the British Government." But he never talked of absorbing the State of Indore, because the Rajah had died leaving no "heirs natural." The Resident, however,—by what was afterwards censured as his "precipitation," but what was really his strong sense of the obligation of this right of adoption,—defeated Lord Hardinge's design, and the cession of the reigning Holkar "assumed," to use his Lordship's language, "more the form of a succession by legitimate right."

Nor are Gwalior and Indore the only recent cases. In Bhopal in 1820, the succession, on a vacancy without heirs, was at once filled by the Local Representative, the late Sir John Malcolm, without even any reference to the Supreme Government—to the intense delight of the Puthans, who, to show their gratitude, offered him their swords and their lives. So also in Duttchah in 1840, in Orchha in 1842, in Kota in 1828, in Banswarra in 1842, in Odeyore\* in the same year, in Doongerpore in 1846, and later still in Errowlee. In all these States, under Lord Dalhousie's law, the chiefs having died "without heirs natural," "the territories should have been made to elapse." But in all the opposite course was pursued. The right of adoption was recognized and the States were reserved.

If, then, this new theory, of what may be termed painless extinction, is hereafter to be acted on by the British Government, a fundamental change in the constitution of Indian policy will be commenced, and India is a country in which experiments on society are very dangerous.

But even if our Supremacy would justify, either in law or morals, his theory and practice of subversion, look at the enormity of the operation, divide and detail it as the Indian Government may. The greater part of India is still in the possession of Native Princes; they yet retain 700,000 square miles of territory; they yet

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possess a population of 53 millions of subjects, a revenue of 10 millions sterling; armies 400,000 strong. All will not yield without a struggle. We may be able to annex the Nizam's dominions—absorb Oude—to subvert the Guicowar, without much bloodshed or great difficulty. But not the Rajpoot Princes, not the Bundelcund Rajahs, not the Protected Sikh and the Hill States. There, we shall have to encounter brave soldiers, attached subjects, and a love of independence, preserved, in a remarkable manner, for centuries. This policy is, therefore, essentially a warlike policy,—it has bloodshed, and devastation, and conquest in prospect; it is an expensive policy,—warfare is ever costly and burthensome; it is also an ambitious policy, an aggressive policy, an intolerant policy, unworthy of the English crown and people, and contrary to the statutable enactments of Parliament itself.

But, suppose it at last carried out; suppose the British Government masters of all India, administering, or trying to administer, the affairs of 1,300,000 square miles of varied and diversified territory—ruling, or endeavouring to rule, 150 millions of people, still more varied and diversified, directly and immediately. How frightful the responsibility—how enormous the risk. At best we could only hope for safety; success would require centuries to realize. But should the attempt fail—should we, in grasping at too much, lose all. Where then would be our Oriental “Mission,” for which policy excuses, and philanthropy reconciles itself to, these acts of injustice?

To those who, like Mr. Campbell and Mr. Thoby Prinsep,\* allege that our Indian difficulties arise from our not being complete masters of the whole area of India, and who, like Lord Dalhousie, argue in favour of losing no opportunity of subverting Native States, and annexing their territories to our dominions, may then be replied:—

1. Considerations for our own safety, arising, in the judgment of the eminent authorities already quoted, from the maintenance of the authority of our Native Allies.
2. The limited and restricted character of our Supremacy, and the tendency which an avowal of our intention to disregard those limitations and restrictions has to degenerate our Government to one of mere unlicensed and uncontrolled power and force.

\* In his pamphlet, *The Indian Question* in 1853.

3. The moral advantages of a strict adherence to good faith, of a generous interpretation of treaties, and of a liberal course of policy towards our inferiors.
4. The risk, as experience warns us, that we run of only increasing our financial difficulties by extensions of our territories.
5. The magnitude of the task of adding to our dominions a greater area than that we already rule.
6. The evil effects which the immense extension of patronage at home, consequent on the further employment of European agency in our new acquisitions, may produce by increasing the power of home authorities.
7. The danger to England as well as to India which a successful resistance in any one case may originate and produce.
8. The injustice, the slaughter, and the cost of pursuing such a policy.
9. The hopelessness of promoting the improvement and happiness either of our old or our new territories by such means.

It is idle to urge that the countries and subjects of native princes would be benefited by the change. Such an argument, used as a rule of policy, would justify almost any aggression, and might, with equal validity, be applied to the destruction, as to the extension of our Indian Empire. There are, no doubt, Native States in India where few evidences can be seen of intelligence, spirit, or improvement in their governments. But the unhappiness and misery of their people is too large an inference to deduce from a state of apathy and indifference on the part of these Courts; caused chiefly, it may be, by our interference with the proper sphere of their duties. For even in ill ruled Native States the princes are under the controul, to a large extent, of native public opinion, of native public spirit, and, when necessary, of native public resistance; wherein lie their subjects' security. Nor is it to be forgotten, as evidence of the actual condition of the people of such States, that they are not *adscripti glebæ*—they are not slaves. No extradition law follows them into our provinces; they may emigrate from oppression; they may fly from misrule; they may find, if they can, happiness and prosperity in the adjoining British territories. But, even from those principalities most seriously charged by us with bad government, the Ryots do *not* fly. On the contrary, there is a steady flow of emigration from British provinces,



into both the Nizam's and the King of Oude's territories. Yet people do not, either in India or in Ireland, by preference shun comfort and well doing, or shuffle on in misery and hardship.

But—finally—it is not ill ruled Native States that we have commenced to subvert. The Sattara State was prosperous and well-doing; its princes were prudent and economical; they spent their revenues beneficently on roads, bridges, and other public works; nor did they over spend themselves, for they had always large cash balances both in their public and private treasuries. Their administration drew down the applause of Residents, of the Bombay Government, of the Supreme Government, of the Court of Directors, of the Board of Controul; it produced them laudatory and flattering epistles, and procured for them complimentary presents of jewelled swords and model field-pieces. Better still, their rule was blessed with the contentment and the prosperity of their subjects; and “unquestionably,” said Sir George Clerk, in 1848, “a Native Government conducted as that of Sattara has been a source of strength to the British Government.” Neither the happy and prosperous condition of the country and people, nor the just and praiseworthy government of its princes, could, however, save Sattara. “I take this fitting opportunity,” said Lord Dalhousie, in pronouncing his unworthy sentence against it, “of recording my strong and deliberate opinion, that in the exercise of a wise and sound policy, the British Government is bound not to put aside or to neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves;—and Sattara “fell, unwept, without a crime.” But though territory was acquired, revenue—fitting punishment for the greedy—has been lost. And, by the latest accounts, the new British functionaries there—disappointed of profit—are racking the Sattara ryots, are compelling the Sattara gentry to exhibit the titles of their estates, and are resuming lands in the proprietary archives of which they can discover, or imagine themselves to discover, any legal defects or insufficiencies.

It is not, therefore, to improve the condition of their people that Native States are to be overthrown. It is (in serious truth) to gratify a vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself; and may, if not *now* restrained by Parliamentary interference, endanger everything in India.





# INDIA REFORM.

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No. V.

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EXTRACT FROM MILL'S HISTORY  
ON  
THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT;  
AND  
OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY  
COMMITTEES IN 1852.  
BY JOHN SULLIVAN, ESQ.

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## EXTRACT FROM MILL'S HISTORY

ON

## THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT.

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"THE operation of Mr. Pitt's new law produced occasion for another legislative interference. In passing that law, two objects were very naturally pursued. To avoid the imputation of what was represented as the heinous guilt of Mr. Fox's bill, it was necessary, that the principal part of the power should *appear* to remain in the hands of the Directors. For ministerial advantage, it was necessary, that it should in *reality* be all taken away.

Minds drenched with terror are easily deceived. Mr. Fox's bill threatened the Directors with evils which to them, at any rate, were not imaginary. And with much art, and singular success, other men were generally made to believe, that it was fraught with mischief to the nation.

Mr. Pitt's bill professed to differ from that of his rival, chiefly in this very point, that while the one destroyed the power of the Directors, the other left it almost entire. The double purpose of the minister was obtained, by leaving them the forms, while the substance was taken away. In the temper into which the mind of the nation had been artfully brought, the deception was easily passed. And vague and ambiguous language was the instrument. The terms, in which the functions of the Board of Control were described, implied, in their most obvious import, no great deduction from the former powers of the Directors. They were susceptible of an interpretation which took away the whole.

In all arrangements between parties of which the one is to any considerable degree stronger than the other, all ambiguities in the terms are sooner or later forced into that interpretation which is most favourable to the strongest party, and least favourable to the weakest. The short-sighted Directors understood not this law of human nature; possibly saw not, in the terms of the statute, any meaning beyond what they desired to see; that which the authors of the terms appeared, at the time, to have as ardently at heart as themselves.

The Directors had not enjoyed their imaginary dignities long, when the Board of Control began operations which surprised them; and a struggle which they were little able to maintain, immediately ensued. The reader is already acquainted with the disputes which arose on the payment of the debts of the Nabob of Arcot; and on the appointment of a successor to Lord Macartney, as Governor of Fort St. George.

Lieutenant-Colonel Ross had been guilty of what the Directors considered an outrageous contempt of their authority. In July, 1785, they dictated a severe reprimand. The Board of Control altered the dispatch, by striking out the censure. The dignity of the Directors was now touched in a most sensible part. "The present occasion," they said, "appeared to them so momentous, and a submission on their part so destructive of all order and subordination in India, that they must take the liberty of informing the Right Honourable Board that no dispatch can be sent to India which does not contain the final decision of the Directors on Lieutenant-Colonel Ross." The Board of Control, it is probable, deemed the occasion rather too delicate for the scandal of a struggle. It could well afford a compromise: and crowned its compliance, in this instance, with the following comprehensive declaration, "We trust, however, that by this acquiescence, it will not be understood that we mean to recognise any power in you to transmit to India either censure or approbation of the conduct of any servant, civil or military, exclusive of the control of this Board:" that is to say, they were not to retain the slightest authority, in any other capacity than that of the blind and passive instruments of the superior power.

These cases are a few, out of a number, detached for the purpose of giving greater precision to the idea of the struggle which for a time the Court of Directors were incited to maintain with the Board of Control. At last an occasion arrived which carried affairs to a crisis. In 1787, the democratical party in Holland rose to the determination of throwing off the yoke of the aristocratical party. As usual, the English government interfered, and by the strong force of natural tendency, in favour of the aristocratical side. The French government, with equal zeal, espoused the cause of the opposite party; and a war was threatened between England and France. The Directors took the alarm; petitioned for an augmentation of military

force ; and four royal regiments, destined for that service, were immediately raised. Happily the peace with France was not interrupted. The Directors were of opinion that, now, the regiments were not required. The Board of Control, however, adhered to its original design. The expense of conveying the troops, and the expense of maintaining them in India, would be very great. The finances of the Company were in their usual state of extreme pressure and embarrassment. This addition to their burdens the Directors regarded as altogether gratuitous ; and tending to nothing but the gradual transfer of all military authority in India from the Company to the minister. Their ground appeared to be strong ; by an act which passed in 1781, they were exempted from the payment of any troops which were not sent to India upon their requisition. They resolved to make a stand, refusing to charge the Company with the expense of the ministerial regiments. The Board of Control maintained that, by the act of 1784, it received the power, upon the refusal of the Company to concur in any measure which it deemed expedient for the government of India, to order the expense of the measure to be defrayed out of the territorial revenues. The Directors, looking to the more obvious, and, at the time of its passing, the avowed meaning of the act, which professed to confirm, not to annihilate the "chartered rights of the Company," denied the construction which was now imposed upon the words. They took the opinion of several eminent lawyers, who, looking at the same points with themselves, rather than the unlimited extent to which the terms of the act were capable of stretching, declared that the pretensions of the ministers were not authorized by law.

The question of the full, or limited, transfer of the government of India, was to be determined. The minister, therefore, resolved to carry it before a tribunal on whose decision he could depend. On the 25th of February, 1788, he moved the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill. When the meaning of an act is doubtful, or imperfect, the usual remedy is a bill to explain and amend. Beside the confession of error which that remedy appears to imply, a confession not grateful to ministerial sensibility, something is understood to be altered by that proceeding in the matter of the law. Now, the extraordinary powers, to which the claim was at this time advanced, might, it was probable, be more easily allowed, if they were



believed to be old powers, already granted, than new powers, on which deliberation, for the first time, was yet to be made. For this, or for some other reason, the ministers did not bring in a bill to explain and amend their former act, but a bill to declare its meaning. The business of a legislature is to *make* laws. To *declare the meaning of the laws*, is the business of a judicatory. What, in this case, the ministers therefore called upon the parliament to perform, was not an act of legislation, but an act of judicature. They called upon it successfully, of course, to supersede the courts of justice, and to usurp the decision of a question of law; to confound, in short, the two powers, of judicature and legislation.

In the speech, in which Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in the bill by means of which this act of judicature was to be performed, it was, he declared, incomprehensible to him, that respectable men of the law should have questioned that interpretation of the statute of 1784 for which he contended. "In his mind nothing could be more clear, than that there was no one step that could have been taken previous to passing the act of 1784, by the Court of Directors, touching the military and political concerns of India, and also the collection, management, and application of the revenues of the territorial possessions, that the Commissioners of the Board of Control had not now a right to take by virtue of the powers and authority vested in them by the act of 1784."

If every power which had belonged to the Directors, might be exerted by the Board of Control, against the consent of the Directors; but the Directors could not exercise the smallest political power against the consent of the Board of Control, it is evident that all political power was taken away from the Directors. The present declaration of Mr. Pitt, with regard to the interpretation of his act, was, therefore, directly contradictory to his declarations in 1783, when he professed to leave the power of the Directors regulated, rather than impaired.

Mr. Dundas, the President of the Board of Control, spoke a language still more precise. "It was the meaning, he affirmed, of the act of 1784, that the Board of Control, if it chose, might apply the whole revenue of India to the purposes of its defence, without leaving to the Company a single rupee."

The use to which the minister was, in this manner, about to con-

vert the parliament, the opponents of the bill described as full of alarm. To convert the makers of law into the interpreters of law, was, itself, a circumstance in the highest degree suspicious ; involved in it the destruction of all certainty of law, and by necessary consequence of all legal government. To convert into a judicature the British parliament, in which influence made the will of the minister the governing spring, was merely to erect an all-powerful tribunal, by which every iniquitous purpose of the minister might receive its fulfilment. The serpentine path, which the minister had thus opened, was admirably calculated for the introduction of every fraudulent measure, and the accomplishment of every detestable design. He finds an object with a fair complexion ; lulls suspicion asleep by liberal professions ; frames a law in terms so indefinite as to be capable of stretching to the point in view ; watches his opportunity ; and, when that arrives, calls upon an obedient parliament, to give his interpretation to their words. By this management, may be gained, with little noise or observation, such acquisitions of power, as, if openly and directly pursued, would at least produce a clamour and alarm.

When, however, the opponents of the bill contended that the act did not warrant the interpretation which the Legislature was now called upon to affix ; they assumed a weaker ground. They showed, indeed, that the act of 1784, was so contrived as to afford strong appearances of the restricted meaning from which the Minister wished to be relieved ; such appearances as produced general deception at the time ;\* but it was impossible to show, that the terms of the act were not so indefinite, as to be capable of an interpretation which involved every power of the Indian Government.

It was indeed true, that when a law admits of two interpretations, it is the maxim of the courts of law, to adopt that interpretation which is most in favour of the party against whom the law is supposed to operate. In Parliament, the certain maxim is, to adopt that interpretation which is most favourable to the minister.

\* Mr. Baring said, that "when the bill of 1784 was in agitation, it had not been intimated to the Directors, that the bill gave any such power to the Commissioners of Control, as was now contended for : if they had so understood it, they would not have given their support to a bill that tended to annihilate the Company, and deprive them of all their rights and powers." *Parl. Hist.* xvii. 67.

The memory of the minister was well refreshed with descriptions of the dreadful effects which he said would flow from the powers transferred to the minister by the bill of Mr. Fox. As the same or still greater powers were transferred to the minister by his own, so they were held in a way more alarming and dangerous. Under the proposed act of Mr. Fox, they would have been avowedly held. Under the act of Mr. Pitt, they were held in secret, and by fraud. Beside the difference, between powers exercised avowedly, and powers exercised under a cover and by fraud, there was one other difference between the bill of Mr. Fox and that of Mr. Pitt. The bill of Mr. Fox transferred the power of the Company to commissioners appointed by Parliament. The bill of Mr. Pitt transferred them to commissioners appointed by the King. For Mr. Pitt to say that commissioners chosen by the Parliament were not better than commissioners chosen by the King, was to say that Parliament was so completely an instrument of bad government, that it was worse calculated to produce good results than the mere arbitrary will of a King. All those who asserted that the bill of Mr. Pitt was preferable to that of Mr. Fox, are convicted of holding, however they may disavow, that remarkable opinion.

The declaratory bill itself professed to leave the commercial powers of the Company entire. Here, too, profession was at variance with fact. The commercial funds of the Company were blended with the political. The power of appropriating the one, was the power of appropriating the whole. The military and political stores were purchased in England with the produce of the commercial sales. The Presidencies abroad had the power of drawing upon the domestic treasury to a vast amount. The bill, therefore, went to the confiscation of the whole of the Company's property. It was a bill for taking the trading capital of a Company of merchants, and placing it at the disposal of the ministers of the crown.

Besides these objections to the general powers assumed by the bill, the particular measure in contemplation was severely arraigned. To send out to India troops, called the King's, when troops raised by the Company in India could be so much more cheaply maintained was an act on which the mischievousness of all unnecessary expense stamped the marks of the greatest criminality. That criminality obtained a character of still deeper atrocity, when the end was considered, for which it was incurred. It was the increase of crown

patronage, by the increase of that army which belonged to the crown. And what was the use of that patronage? To increase that dependence upon the crown which unites the Members of the House of Commons, in a tacit confederacy for their own benefit, against all political improvement.

Another objection to the troops was drawn from what was called the doctrine of the constitution: that no troops should belong to the King, for which parliament did not annually vote the money.

Some of the Directors professed, that though the powers, darkly conveyed by the Act of 1784, were not altogether concealed from them at the time; they had given their consent to the bill, from the confidence they had in the good intentions of the ministry; whom they never believed to be capable of aiming at such extravagant powers as those which they now assumed.

This body of arguments was encountered by the minister, first with the position that no interpretation of a law was to be admitted, which defeated its end. But what was the end of this law of his, was a question, from the solution of which he pretty completely abstained. If it was the good government of India; he did not attempt the difficult task of proving that to *this* end the powers for which he contended were in any degree conducive. If it was the increase of ministerial influence; of their conduciveness to this end, no proof was required.

To the charge that he had introduced his act, under professions of not adding to the influence of the Crown, nor materially diminishing the powers of the Company; professions which his present proceedings completely belied: he made answer by asserting, broadly and confidently, that it was the grand intention of the act of 1784 to transfer the government of India from the Court of Directors to the Board of Control; and that he had never held a language which admitted a different construction.

Mr. Dundas denied, what was asserted on the part of the Company, that for some time after the passing of the Act, the Board of Control had admitted its want of title to the powers which now it assumed. The Company offered to produce proof of their assertion at the bar of the House. The ministers introduced a motion, and obtained a vote that they should not be allowed. No further proof of the Company's assertion, according to the rules of practical logic, could be rationally required.

To show that the Board of Control had exercised the powers which it was thus proved that they had disclaimed, Mr. Dundas was precipitated into the production of facts, which were better evidence of other points than that to which he applied them. He made the following statement: that in 1785, the resources of the Company were so completely exhausted, as to be hardly equal to payment of the arrears which were due to the army: that the troops were so exasperated by the length of those arrears, as to be ripe for mutiny: and that the Board of Control sent orders to apply the Company's money to the satisfaction of the troops, postponing payments of every other description. In this appropriation, however, was it not true, that the Directors, though reluctantly, did at last acquiesce?

Mr. Dundas further contended, that without the powers in question, namely, the whole powers of government, the Board of Control would be a nugatory institution.

If the whole powers of government, however, were necessary for the Board of Control, what use was there for another governing body, without power? This was to have two governing bodies; the one real, the other only in show. Of this species of duplication the effect is, to lessen the chances for good government, increase the chances for bad; to weaken all the motives for application, honesty, and zeal in the body vested with power; and to furnish it with an ample screen, behind which its love of ease, power, lucre, vengeance, may be gratified more safely at the expense of its trust.

To crown the ministerial argument, Mr. Dundas advanced, that the powers which were lodged with the Board of Control, how great soever they might be, were lodged without danger, because the Board was responsible to parliament. To all those who regard the parliament as substantially governed by ministerial influence, responsibility to parliament means responsibility to the minister. The responsibility of the Board of Control to parliament, meant, according to this view of the matter, the responsibility of the ministry to itself. And all those, among whom the authors of the present bill and their followers were to be ranked as the most forward and loud, who denounced parliament as so corrupt, that it would have been sure to employ, according to the most wicked purposes of the minister, the powers transferred to it by the bill of Mr. Fox, must have regarded as solemn mockery, the talk, whether from their own lips, or those of other people, about the responsibility of ministers to parliament.

Meeting the objections to the sending of King's troops, Mr. Pitt confessed his opinion, that the army in India ought all to be on one establishment; and should all belong to the King; nor did he scruple to declare, that it was in preparation for this reform that the troops were now about to be conveyed.

With regard to the doctrine, called constitutional, about the necessity of an annual vote of parliament for the maintenance of all troops kept on foot by the King, he remarked, that the Bill of Rights, and the Mutiny Act, the only positive laws upon the subject, were so vague and indefinite (which is very true) as to be almost nugatory; that one of the advantages attending the introduction of the present question would be, to excite attention and apply reform to that important but defective part of the constitutional law; and that he was ready to receive from any quarter the suggestion of checks upon any abuse to which the army, or the patronage of India, might appear to be exposed.

If any persons imagined, that this language, about the reform of the constitutional law, would lead to any measures for that desirable end; they were egregiously deceived. Besides, was it any reason, because the law which pretended to guard the people from the abuse of a military power was inadequate to its ends, that therefore a military force should now be created, more independent of Parliament than any which, under that law, had as yet been allowed to exist? That any danger, however, peculiar to itself, arose from this army, it was, unless for the purpose of the moment, weak to pretend.

Notwithstanding the immense influence of the Minister, so much suspicion was excited by the contrast between his former professions, and the unlimited power at which he now appeared to be grasping, that the bill was carried through the first stages of its progress, by very small majorities. With a view to mitigate this alarm, Mr. Pitt proposed that certain clauses should be added; the first, to limit the number of troops, beyond which the orders of the Board of Control should not be obligatory on the East India Company; the second, to prevent the Board from increasing the salary attached to any office under the Company, except with the concurrence of Directors and Parliament; the third, to prevent the Board, except with the same concurrence, from ordering any gratuity for services performed; the fourth, to oblige the Directors annually to lay before Parliament the account of the Company's receipts and disbursements.

The annexation of these clauses opened a new source of argument against the bill. A declaratory bill, with enacting clauses, involved, it was said, an absurdity which resembled a contradiction in terms. It declared that an act had a certain meaning : but a meaning limited by enactments yet remaining to be made. It declared that a law without limiting clauses, and a law with them, was one and the same thing. By the bill before them, if passed, the House would declare that certain powers had been vested in the Board of Control, and yet not vested, without certain conditions, which had not had existence. Besides, if such conditions were now seen to be necessary to prevent the powers claimed under the act from producing the worst of consequences, what was to be thought of the Legislature for granting such dangerous powers? It was asked, whether this was not so disgraceful to the wisdom of parliament, if it saw not the danger ; so disgraceful to its virtue, if it saw it without providing the remedy, as to afford a proof, that no such powers in 1784 were meant by the Legislature to be conveyed ?

A protest in the upper house, signed Portland, Carlisle, Devonshire, Portchester, Derby, Sandwich, Cholmondeley, Powis, Cardiff, Craven, Bedford, Loughborough, Fitzwilliam, Scarborough, Buckinghamshire,—fifteen lords—exhibits, on the subject of the patronage, the following words : “The patronage of the Company—and this seems to be the most serious terror to the people of England—the Commissioners of Control enjoy in the worst mode, without that responsibility which is the natural security against malversation and abuse. They cannot immediately appoint ; but they have that weight of recommendation and influence, which must ever inseparably attend on substantial power, and which, in the present case, has not any where been attempted to be denied.—Nor is this disposal of patronage without responsibility the only evil that characterizes the system. All the high powers and prerogatives with which the commissioners are vested, they may exercise invisibly—and thus, for a period at least, evade, perhaps in a great measure finally baffle, all political responsibility ; for they have a power of administering to their clerks and other officers an oath of secrecy framed for the occasion by themselves ; and they possess in the India House the suspicious instrument of a Secret Committee, bound to them by an oath.”—*Mill and Wilson's History of India*, vol. 5. p. 84.

# OBSERVATIONS ON THE EVIDENCE

GIVEN BEFORE

## THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES.

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THE Committee of the House of Lords, in reporting the Evidence taken before them, remark, "that the general tendency of that Evidence is favourable to the present system of administering the affairs of India." They seem to have been led to this conclusion mainly by the evidence of Mr. J. S. Mill. It is not without great diffidence that I venture to question opinions that come from such a high authority, and I should not do so, but from a conviction that the more this important subject is sifted the better for the public interests.

Mr. Mill is questioned as to the relative advantage of a single and of a double Government, and he pronounces decidedly in favour of a "*double Government*." Now there is ground of complaint that this question is much clouded by the use of loose phraseology. Mr. Mill admits that the Court of Directors has no power to do of themselves any act whatever, and that the law compels them on all occasions to yield obedience to the mandates of the Board of Control, and yet he speaks as if the one body had co-ordinate authority with the other, and as if the power of government was divided between them. So Lord Ellenborough, while he proposed to strip the Court of Directors of the only vestige which the law has left them of independence,—*viz.* undivided control over the home Treasury—still spoke of the necessity of retaining a double government for India. But it is manifestly an abuse of language to call that a Government which has none of the attributes of government—which cannot command, but which must obey. A double agency for carrying on a Government is a very different thing from a double



Government. The Government of India is in that Board which the law empowers "to superintend, direct, and control all acts and operations and concerns" which relate to India, and the affairs of that Government are carried on by a double agency.

But not only does Mr. Mill insist that that body which is bound to obey, is co-ordinate with the body whose function it is to command, but he contends that the public should be taught to believe in the fiction. "It seems to me important," he says, "that the Court should not be led to consider themselves, or be considered by the public, and by the people of India as a subordinate, but as a co-ordinate body."\* What is this but saying it is expedient that the public—I beg to be forgiven for the coarseness of the expression—should be led to believe a lie? Nor if we were called upon for a strict definition of the word subordinate, should we not answer by saying that the individual, or the body, is subordinate which is bound by law under penalties to yield implicit obedience to the commands of another body; and this is precisely the relation in which the Court of Directors is placed by the Board of Control.

The subordinate Presidencies in India are, in strict propriety of speech, called Governments, because, though bound to obey the orders of the Supreme Government, yet in the absence of those orders, they exercise all the attributes of government within their respective circles; but the Court of Directors is shorn of all such attributes—its simple duty, as defined by law, is to suggest measures for the consideration of the Board of Control, and to promulgate to the Governments in India the measures which that Board may sanction. It is just conceivable that, under the present system, a benefit might arise from getting the public to believe that which is not, provided we could be sure that they would never know the truth; but when either from the publication of records, or from other sources, the public come to be informed that measures, which were to all appearance, measures of the Court of Directors, were so utterly repugnant to the judgment and feelings of that body, that they would rather have gone to prison than authenticate them, what possible advantage could arise from making the public and the people of India believe that they have, as a co-ordinate authority, originated

\* *Lords' Evidence*, pp. 317, 230—39.

or approved of such measures? For example:—not long ago the two authorities were at daggers drawn upon the subject of the titular king of Delhi, the Board of Control seeking to support the Government of India in an infringement upon the chartered rights of that pageant, the Court of Directors, almost by an unanimous vote, so stiffly resisting the encroachment, that “several of them were fully prepared to go to prison rather than sign an order which they thought to be grossly unjust.”\* Now, if the Board had persisted in this gross injustice, would not the only consolation to the Directors under such circumstances, have been a knowledge—common to them and to the public—that they were acting by compulsion as subordinates, and not willingly as principals? Legal fictions are found to be mischievous, and we are getting rid of them as fast as possible; and yet it is seriously proposed to maintain, as good in itself, a fiction of Government, under which a Minister of the Crown may at any time perpetrate “gross injustice” upon India, in the name of the Court of Directors; for be it remembered, that after having forced their measures upon the Court of Directors, the Board of Control gets behind a screen; the obnoxious orders are not stamped by the joint signatures of the two co-ordinate authorities, but only by the one which may have reprobated them. If the measures of the Board of Control are good, should it not have credit for them? if they are bad, should it be allowed scape-goats?

Mr. Mill is decidedly of opinion that there is a better security for the good government of India in a system which gives to one body the name, and to the other the reality of power, than in another system, which should vest the name and the reality in the same body.

“I think,” he says,† “the fact that all Indian proceedings are reviewed by two separate authorities, independent of one another, is a much greater security for good government than would exist under any system by which those two bodies are merged into one. The double revision by persons of a different class, in a different position, and probably with different prepossessions, tends greatly to promote a due and rigid examination.

“Any alteration which placed‡ the control of the Government in some one authority, instead of being between two, would, I think, be for the worse.

“I think \* \* \* that the advantages now derived§ from the division of the governing body into two parts—the one having

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 218.

† P. 307.

‡ P. 309.

§ P. 315

the initiative, and the other the ultimate control - would not be obtained under the system of a Minister and Council. In the first place, there is now not only an examination by two authorities, but successive examinations by two sets of competent subordinates. If the body were but one, there would be only one set of subordinates; and that is not a trifling consideration, but in practice a very important one. In the next place, if the Minister of the Crown were President of the co-ordinate body, whether it were called Court of Directors or Council of India, he would have, not as at present, substantially a mere veto, but substantially the initiative, as the Chairman now has; and in that case the Council would not be under anything like responsibility, and would not exercise anything like the same power that the Court of Directors do."

When asked whether he would carry the same principle into effect in every case, Mr. Mill answers,\* "I am inclined to think that a double Government would be useful wherever it was necessary to have a body of a permanent character, specially conversant with a subject not generally studied by politicians in this country, while at the same time, the general Government of the country must have a voice. I should conceive that there might be a great advantage from having somebody analogous to the court of Directors, as a Council, to assist the Colonial Minister."

But a permanent Council to assist a Colonial Minister, does not involve the principle of a double government. Mr. Mill does not propose to create a Colonial Company for the purpose of ostensibly vesting the Government of the Colonies in that body, and then really vesting the Government in a Minister of the Crown, and giving that Minister the power of exercising despotic authority, whenever he pleases, over the Colonies, in disguise. That is what the law, as it now stands, enables the Minister for India, to do. A permanent Council to assist the Minister for India in governing India, is precisely the scheme that has been propounded by every opponent of the double government. There is nothing in Mr. Mill's reasoning to controvert the position, that if a double Government be good for India, it is good for the whole empire.

It is good for India, Mr. Mill says,† because peculiar qualifications are required for the government of India. "The study of India must be as much a profession in itself, as law or medicine;" it is "essential that the administration of India should be carried on by men who have been trained in the subordinate offices, and have studied India as it were professionally." These necessary qualifications abound,

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 300.

† P. 313.

says Mr. Mill, in the Court of Directors; they are scanty in the Board of Control. What then is the legitimate conclusion from these premises? Surely, that the Government ought to be in the hands of the qualified body—but that body, Mr. Mill admits, has “in reality no substantial power, except what it derives from the force of its reasons.”\*

Now it is conceivable that good might arise if this qualified body was cut into two; one division of it being sent up to assist the Minister in reviewing the dispatches which would be prepared by the other half sitting at the India House; but what shall we say of a system, or of eulogies upon a system, which enables the uninstructed to mar at their pleasure, the work of the instructed? Surely this is reversing the usual order of things—it is, as it were, compelling the tutor to send his lessons to be corrected by the pupils? The advantages which are said to arise from a double revision of all Indian proceedings, presuppose the employment of two sets of equally competent minds upon the work; but in the Board of Control there is not at this moment a single individual who ever set his foot in India, and yet this Board has the power, and exercises that power at its discretion, of overruling “the opinions of persons who,” says Mr. Mill, “from their position and their previous life have made a study of Indian subjects, and acquired experience in them.”

The only weapon, says Mr. Mill, which the Directors can effectually use against the domination of the Board, is that of “reason.” “The initiative† being given to one body, and a veto to the other, and the body over which the veto can be exercised having in reality no substantial power, except that which it derives from the force of its reasons, it is under very strong inducements to put reason on its side if it can. If the despatches, which originate with the Court of Directors, are not well grounded in reason, they carry no weight with the Board. The Court of Directors does not, and cannot exercise any effective share in the Government, except in so far as it takes care to have reason on its side. Having this instrument of power, and no other, it has the strongest motive to use that instrument to the utmost; and in doing so, it is a most efficient check upon the body which has the ultimate power, because that power being sure to have all subjects brought before it, with the result of the full consideration and concentrated judgment of a body which, from its constitution, has commanded that special knowledge and information which the President of the Board of Control in general has not, the President is

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 320.

† Ibid. p. 315.

under great inducements not to set aside the judgment of this comparatively well-informed body, unless he can give as strong, or stronger, reasons on the contrary side."

Now we might, in the first place, be led to conclude from this language, that the power of the Board of Control was confined to a suspensive veto upon the proceedings of the Court of Directors; but that body has not only power to forbid that which the Directors think ought to be done, but it has the power of compelling them to do that against which their judgment and conscience revolt. Next, it assumes that the Board of Control may always be influenced by sound reasoning. But no one knows better than Mr. Mill, that what may be very good reasoning to that body, which he tells us "has special knowledge and information," is no reasoning at all to the other body, which is wanting in those requisites. For example, upon no subject has more cogent reasoning been employed than upon the dangers which will—sooner or later—spring out of our levelling system of government; but all the reasoning of Munro, of Elphinstone, of Metcalfe, of Malcolm, upon this subject, is so much waste paper at the Board of Control; the prevailing opinion there is, that all native sovereigns, and with them the native aristocracies, should be swept from the face of the earth, and that if one native's turban is seen peering over that of his fellows, it should be put down to the common level. This arises from the fact, that there is not in the Controlling Board, that personal knowledge of the wants, wishes, feelings, character, and habits of the people of India, which abounded in the great statesmen whose judgments are set aside; not because that Board can give as strong or stronger reasons on the contrary side, but simply because they want the information which could alone enable them to form an accurate judgment on the subject. Was it the "sound reasoning" of the Court of Directors that induced the Board of Control to draw in its horns in the matter of the King of Delhi? Not at all; it was not until public attention was in some measure drawn to the subject, by a vote carried in the Court of Proprietors to produce the papers,—not until it was known that some of the Directors were ready to brave the law rather than lend their names to what they considered to be "grossly unjust," that that Board gave way.

But Mr. Mill knows that upon one most important class of sub-

jects, viz., all that relates in any way to politics, there is no room for the "sound reasoning" of the Court of Directors; for the very law which professed to place the Government of India in that body, deprived it of all cognizance of matters relating to war and peace, to treaties and negotiations with native states and princes in India, and other states and princes. So that the Board of Control in all such matters acts so despotically, that the President may, as admitted by Sir John Hobhouse, order the Government of India to seize upon a neighbour's territory, declare war, or make peace. In all such matters, the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors acts only ministerially; it receives dispatches from India, and sends dispatches to India. But the dispatches received from India are forwarded unopened to the Board of Control, and the dispatches sent emanate from that Board.\* It is a grave mistake, therefore, to say that "all Indian proceedings are revised by two separate bodies." A most important branch of these proceedings is entirely withheld from the so-called Governing body; most important, for by this enactment the territories, rights, and interests of all the native princes, and chiefs of India, and their subjects, are, in fact, placed at the mercy of the Board of Control. It rests with that authority to declare what subjects are to come under the category of Secret. "This power," said Mr. Courtenay,† "in the period to which I can speak, was exercised very largely. I believe that certain very important discussions which took place in the Council of Fort William, in the year 1814, are still (viz. in 1832) kept secret from the Court of Directors." And is it not a fact, that all the proceedings regarding the conquest and administration of Scinde, proceedings involving manifest breaches of law, were recorded in the Secret Department; and that when the Court of Directors was, after a lapse of time, invited to take part in some discussion respecting that country, it declined, upon the ground, that all previous proceedings on that subject had been kept from it through the agency of the Secret Department?

Keeping, then, in mind this fact, that the Legislature has confided to *one* authority unchecked power over one of the most important branches of the General Government; that it rests entirely with that

\* Lords' Evidence, pp. 18, 19.

† Commons' Evidence, 1832, p. 45, public.

authority to determine what questions shall come under the category of political; how are we to understand Mr. Mill when he says, that "any alteration which placed the control of the Government under some *one* authority, instead of leaving it divided between *two*, would be for the worse? If," he says,\* "you can have a body unconnected with the General Government of the country, and containing many persons who have made that department of public affairs the business of their lives, as is the case with the Court of Directors, there is much better discussion and much better sifting of the matters committed to their charge, by having such a body, in addition to the Minister of the Crown, than by having the Minister of the Crown without such a body, or the Minister of the Crown acting as Chairman of the body."

But there is no "sifting," no "discussion" when the Secret Department is brought into play. This competent body is then pushed off the stage. The question then is, whether it is better that *all* the proceedings of the Court of India should be sifted and discussed by *one* competent body, or whether only a *portion* of them should be reviewed by a competent body, to be re-reviewed by a comparatively incompetent body; the incompetents having the power to ride over the competents on all occasions, leaving the other portion without any sifting at all. And this question Mr. Mill seems to answer when he says,† "It seems to me to be of the utmost importance to make provision in the constitution of the Government itself, for compelling those who have the governing power to listen to and to take into consideration the opinions of persons who, from their previous life, have made a study of Indian subjects."

Some compulsory enactment, then, is necessary, in order to insure attention to the opinions of those who are competent to give opinions; and how can this object be better attained than by placing such persons in close contact with him who requires to be advised; in other words, by framing the constitution of the Home Government upon the model of the Government abroad? The Governor-General is obliged to read what his Council write, and to hear what they say; and their opinions have weight, because they can be supported by a vote. Why, if the Government in India is entrusted to a single authority, should it be necessary to carry it on by a double agency in England?

The pertinency of this question will be acknowledged, when we consider the functions which each of these authorities has to dis-

\* P. 310.

† P. 314.

charge. From the stress which Mr. Mill lays upon the privilege of the "initiative," one might be led to think that it was the practice for the Court of Directors to originate measures for India—in other words, that India was governed from England; but he corrects that impression, for he tells us,\* that "there are very few acts of the Government of India which it is possible for the authorities here to set aside when they are once done. \* \* \* \* In most of the political measures of a general character, they have very little power of interfering with effect or advantage after the thing is done; they have, however, a great power of making useful comments, which may serve as instructions for subsequent cases of the same kind; and it seems to me the greatest good that the Home authorities can do, is to comment freely on the proceedings of the Local Authorities; to criticise them well, and lay down general principles for the guidance of the government on subsequent occasions;" but Mr. Mill admits,† "that there is less disposition now to lay down general principles than there was formerly."

This is quite in harmony with the admission made, when the India question was under discussion in 1832, by the Directors themselves,‡ "In the ordinary course of administration," they say, "much must be left to the discretion of the Local Governments; and unless upon questions of general policy and personal cases, it rarely occurs that instructions from Home can reach India before the time for acting upon them is gone by." The same language was held at the Board of Control: "After all the labour and thought that may have been bestowed upon Indian affairs by the authorities at Home, I am of opinion," said Mr. Jones, "that India must nevertheless be governed in India."§

It is the Government abroad, then, that has the real "initiative." Measures originate, and are carefully discussed, in the first instance, by the Civil and Military Provincial Authorities, or by diplomatic agents; they are then in a great many instances re-discussed by subordinate Boards; from the subordinate Board they come to the superior Board, where they are finally considered and disposed of. It is in this ripe state that measures come before the Home Authorities. Are two separate Boards, then, really required for the work of "commenting" upon measures, which have been already so thoroughly sifted by the Local Authorities. If two, why not three? What is the use of our elaborate apparatus of Government in India, if all their proceedings need to be put through two crucibles before they are finally stamped? "I cannot but believe," said an authority

\* P. 328.

† P. 329.

‡ Evidence, Public, 1832, p. 189.

§ Ib. p. 41.



to which Mr. Mill will be the first to defer,\* “that a control exercised on the spot, must be infinitely more efficient than any control that can possibly be established in England. The perception of any thing wrong would be much more immediate, as well as much more complete, and the remedy would be much more promptly and effectually applied.”

The legitimate inference from this opinion, the soundness of which no one, I am persuaded, will question, seems to be, that we should endeavour to throw as much of the work of control as possible upon the Superior Local Authority; and in proportion as we do this, we weaken the argument for maintaining duplicate controlling establishments at home.

But does this duplicate system give facilities for the redress of wrongs that may have been committed by the Superior Local Authority? The unfortunate Ameers of Scinde applied to one Governor-General to redress the wrongs which had been inflicted upon them by his predecessor. He referred them to the Home Authorities. They, in consequence, applied in the first instance, through accredited agents, to the Prime Minister; the Prime Minister referred the agents to the President of the Board of Control; the President of the Board of Control referred them to the Court of Directors; and the Directors, in whom the Government of India is said to be vested, with all the inclination, having no power to interfere in their behalf, referred them back to the Governor-General.† The poor supplicants returned home unheard, and filled with astonishment at the ingenious manner in which Indian rulers contrive to evade responsibility for their acts.

Have we not proof here—and the proof can be easily multiplied—of the truth of two things. Firstly: That the leading vice of the present system is, as Mr. Wynn remarked in 1833, the absence of all direct responsibility; and secondly, that the most careful recordation is not, as Mr. Mill supposes, one of the best securities that can be offered for good Government. Seeing, indeed, that all proceedings were as carefully recorded in the earlier periods of our rule, when we had, notoriously, an extremely bad Government in India, as they are now, one wonders to see such an opinion broached; the more particularly when we remember that this recordation is only a register of the opinions and deeds of the govern-

\* Evidence of J. S. Mill, Esq., 1832, Public, p. 61.

† Scinde Blue-Book.

‡ Evidences, p. 301.

ing class, that it contains, of necessity, no allusion to the wants and wishes of the class governed. In these records, we tell our own story ; but the story of those who are affected by our Government is not told at all ; or if it be told, it is told with our own gloss upon it.

It will be easy to shew that when the local authorities and the Home Authorities are bent upon a common object, the most complete system of record is no bar whatever to the perpetration of enormous injustice. For example, Mr. Mill,\* in answer to a question, enumerates the various channels through which the proceedings passed, in the case of the deposed Rajah of Sattara ; and the inference which the Committee is left to draw from this statement is, that that case was so carefully sifted, and so impartially considered, as to make it in the highest degree improbable that any injustice could have been done in it. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that, whether from intention or negligence, *the* fact upon which the whole case hinged was passed over by the authorities who had to decide upon it.

After a reign of twenty years, in which the Rajah had won golden opinions from our Government, he was charged by that Government with having used certain language to certain persons, in a certain place, his accusers being the *only witnesses* against him. It is manifest that the *only* way in which he could defend himself from such a charge was by searching examination into the evidence of those his accusers ; and in order to this it was necessary that he should be put in possession of their evidence, and have ample time to study it. Accordingly, when he, a Sovereign Prince by birth and by treaty with us, was dragged before a Commission of Company's servants to hear the charge, he demanded to be furnished with a copy of the evidence in his own language, parts only of which had been read to him in a language not his own ; an order was passed to supply him with the evidence ; but when, after an interval, he repeated his demand, he was informed that the evidence was of a *secret* nature, and could not therefore be communicated to him.

It was exclusively upon this evidence, thus withheld from him upon the ground of secrecy,—evidence which soon afterwards was published,—that this Prince was deposed, banished, and his private property confiscated. The most careful examination of the record by two sets of functionaries, failed to elicit the fact upon which the

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 301 & 2.

whole question of justice or injustice hinged; and a President of the Board of Control, or a Chairman of the Court of Directors, may at this moment, in the face of it, venture with perfect impunity to assert that the Rajah was fairly tried and properly convicted. It failed also to elicit the fact, that after having solemnly consented to give the Prince a liberal allowance, *and* to restore his private property, the local Government had fulfilled the engagement by giving him an *annuity* not equal to the amount which that property would have yielded if invested in the public funds; and that less than one-half of that annuity is all that is allowed to his surviving family, to be resumed at their death.

What, again, is the use of a complete recordation, if those who have the custody of the records may produce or withhold them at pleasure? The second Rajah of Sattara claimed a right to adopt a successor to his throne. This question was treated by all the authorities at home and abroad, as if it had been an entirely new question, and decided *against* the claim, whereas it appeared by records which were dragged forth *after* judgment was passed, that the question had been formally raised, and as formally decided in *favour* of the right, twenty years before, and that this decision had been acted upon in no less than fifteen instances in the interval. The most careful "sifting" on the part of the two authorities did not bring these facts to light, nor was any disposition evinced to reverse the judgment when they accidentally became known.

"The proper remedy for wrongs done in India," says Mr. Mill,\* "is that the Home Government should so act, as to convince the natives of India, that if their case is just, they will have full justice done to them on a review of the papers, without sending any one here to represent them; and that if their case is unjust, however many people they may send, it will do them no good. I should say, that the security of the good government of India, derived from discussions in Parliament, is far short of that derived from the habitual examination of all papers of importance by persons specially devoted to that object." Now one of two things:—either the authorities did carefully examine the papers in this case, and wilfully suppressed all reference to those which would have compelled them to decide the question of right to adoption in the affirmative; or there was no careful examination of these papers. It seems impossible to escape from either horn of this dilemma; and, in any event

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 303.

there is proof that something else is required for the redress of wrongs in India, besides the "habitual examination of papers."

What is going on at the present moment? We took a territory valued at a million sterling per annum from the Nizam, upon condition of protecting him by a Military force of our own from all enemies, internal and external, and he agreed to aid our troops with a limited contingent force only in time of war. But we have compelled him to keep up this contingent in numbers fixed by ourselves, in a season of profound *peace*. For upwards of thirty years he has borne this burden, and we are now holding out the threat of confiscation of his territory, because he is sinking under it, telling him at the same time that it is his duty to discharge his own "rabble" of an army, and keep ours; that is, that he is to take the bread out of the mouths of his own friends and relations, over whom he has control, in order that he may have the means of feeding our officers, who are independent of him.

"I conceive," says Mr. Mill,\* "that the present governing bodies in this country for the affairs of India have as little sinister interest of any kind as any government in the world." It will be readily admitted that this is strictly true in all questions that arise in their own territory, or in which their own subjects are parties, and in such questions "sinister interest," if they had it, would avail them nothing, because there are Courts of Law in which all native British subjects can obtain redress, even when wronged by their own Government; and this is the glory of that Government. But the case is altogether different with respect to questions which arise out of the British territory. Every augmentation of that territory gives a stimulus to promotion abroad, and to patronage at home; all the Indian Authorities, therefore, have an interest in increasing it. Having conquered all enemies and taken their territories, there is now no fund for increase, but in the possession of our friends---and we have in consequence proclaimed our right to seize upon the territory of all our allies and dependents, whom we may pronounce to have died without heirs---and that, without even hearing those who claim to be heirs. Now, in all these questions, we have a "sinister interest," and that interest has influenced our decisions of such questions from the

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 303.

time that we cheated the Emperor, Shah Aulum,\* out of the pension we had promised him in return for the title deeds which he gave us of our magnificent estate in Bengal, up to the present moment. We have an interest in not ceding to the King of Delhi the territory which we promised him in 1805. We have an interest in withholding from the family of the Nabob of Surat the proportion which we covenanted to pay him out of the revenues of his principality. It is our interest not to redress the wrongs of the Ameers of Scinde. We have an interest in denying to one Rajah of Sattara the inheritance which he claims from us, and to another, the private property which we confiscated. And not long ago, the interest which we have in deciding such questions in our own favour, was manifested in a manner that was anything but creditable. When a majority of Directors—seeing from the impression that the strong protests of some of their colleagues had made, that a vote was likely to pass in the Court of Proprietors, repudiating the annexation of Sattara—called for a ballot; and the question was accordingly decided, according to their wishes, by the votes of some hundreds of ladies and gentlemen, who knew no more of its merits, than they did of a “terra incognita.”

It is this very class of questions, be it remembered, that the law withdraws from the cognizance of the Directors, whenever the Board of Control brings the Secret Department into operation. There would, it is true, be no security against the perpetration of injustice in such cases, if the Government was vested only in one authority; but we should then be able to fix the responsibility for such acts, which now floats so equally between the two, that it is impossible to nail it to either. The real and effectual security against injustice, however, would be, that the giant British Government should not be at liberty to seize upon the possession of its pigmy allies, or to refuse to perform its obligations to them without having proved its right to do so before a disinterested tribunal.

Does this duplicate system then facilitate the decision of questions on which the authorities can exercise an unbiassed judgment?

Passing by the discussions between the two authorities which have thrown India behind all the civilized world in the matter of railroads,

\* For particulars, see the account of this transaction in the Company's own Historian, Mr. Thornton, vol. ii. p. 38.

let us take as an example a question which is now upon the tapis. A company was formed for working the rich iron mines in the south of India, which asked for the same privileges which had been accorded to a former company. The majority of the Directors, headed by the Chairman of the day, were against the concession, whilst the President of the Board of Control of the day was in favour of it. By one of those periodical revolutions, which are amongst the beauties of the present system, there was a change of authorities at both ends of the town—there was a new Chairman and a new President—but unfortunately, the new President had taken up the opinions of the old Chairman, whilst the new Chairman, with the opinions of his predecessor, was in a minority in his own Court. The unfortunate shareholders, therefore, after waiting for eighteen months in the hope that harmony of opinion might be established between the two Boards, with their capital paid up, and their money unemployed, are as far from their object as ever.

Now, if this question, affecting as it does vitally the interests of the Madras territory and people, could not be safely left to the decision of the Madras Government, what possible objection could there be to placing it in the hands of the Supreme Government? And if the Supreme Territorial Government is not competent to decide finally on such questions, for what purpose, may we ask, is it maintained? This is an attempt to govern India in England, and so long as more hands are maintained in England than there is legitimate work for, we must expect to see those bodies, whose proper duty it is to comment only upon the measures of the Local Governments, usurping the proper functions of those Governments.

Mr. Mill attaches importance, not only to the revision of proceedings by two sets of minds, but that those minds should have different prepossessions, and be assisted by two sets of subordinates.\* But these objects may be readily attained, without the agency of two conflicting Boards. There are twenty four Directors, some well acquainted with the affairs of India, some wanting that acquaintance.

Let the well-informed, with the subordinate officers of the India House, take the "initiative," and frame the dispatches, and let the

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 307—316.

less well-informed, with the subordinate officers now employed at the Board of Control, be employed in reviewing them. The ill-informed, that is, those of the Directors, who have never been in India, will look at the proceedings with different feelings and impressions from those who have spent their lives in that country. The objects which Mr. Mill has in view, would be accomplished, but as both bodies would work under one head, we should have a responsible organ of Government, and the initiating Board would never be driven to the painful alternative of adopting "unjust orders," or of going to prison.\*

"I think," says Mr. Mill, "that those who deliberately consider *all* subjects in the first instance recording their opinions, and who do this in such a manner, that in a great majority of cases their opinion is adopted by the controlling power, have a full share, and eventually the largest share, in the administration."

But this mutual share in the administration ceases, as we have already shewn, as a matter of course, whenever the Secret Department is brought into operation; it ceases too whenever the Board of Control puts forward the power which the law gives it, of compelling the promulgation of its own opinions in the name of the Court, upon all occasions and in all departments. Whether this power is exercised frequently or rarely depends mainly upon the temper and the judgment of the individual at the head of it; and surely that is a bad system which depends for its smooth working upon individual character. There are instances, as Mr. Mill admits, in which the friction is so violent as to threaten an entire stoppage of the machine.

"Does not your experience enable you to furnish us with a great variety of instances in which points of controversy have arisen—the result of which was, that the Court was under the necessity of forwarding dispatches to India in a sense directly opposed to that which they themselves had entertained?" "Most clearly," was the answer given, by a former Secretary of the Court of Directors, to this question in 1832.†

\* Mr. Mill says, that the reviewers should also be of a "different class," and in a "different position;" but surely the President of the Board of Control is not of a "different class" from the Chairman of the Court of Directors. They certainly are in a "different position," as different as master and servant.

† Minutes of Evidence, 1832, Public, p. 186.

In one case, says Mr. Mill, several of the Directors were fully prepared to go to prison rather than sign an order of the Board of Control which they thought "grossly unjust;" yet Mr. Mill would have the public believe that the Directors are not a subordinate, but a co-ordinate authority.

Is that then a system to be commended, which gives to the body, best qualified by Mr. Mill's admission, to govern India, only a precarious and a partial share in its government? Is that a system to be perpetuated which, while it gives in name supreme power to the Court of Directors, gives in reality such a strength of power to the Board as to enable it to enforce its decrees upon the former, under the threat of pains and penalties?

The single advantage of this system, as stated by its upholders in 1832 and in 1852 is, that two sets of minds are employed in revising all such proceedings of the Indian Government as are suffered to come within its cognizance. Rather the Directors review the proceedings of the Local Government in such cases, and the Board of Control reviews the proceedings of the Directors, and annuls or confirms them at their pleasure. Now advantage might perhaps arise to the public service if Lord Palmerston were to review the proceedings of Lord Malmesbury, or Lord Aberdeen those of Lord Palmerston; but what should we say of a system which should compel those Noble Lords to submit their dispatches, for amendment, to an authority as new to the policy and diplomacy of Europe, as the present President of the Board of Control is to the affairs of India?

When we consider the fluctuating nature of the Indian Government at home—that we have had three Presidents of the Board of Control within as many years, with a chance of a fourth before the year expires—that the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Directors are changed every year—that they are chosen rather from seniority or popularity, than from any peculiar qualifications for the office—that amongst the many able and distinguished ministerial officers at the two Boards, there is but a single individual who has ever been in India—we shall see, that, whether the Government at home is carried on by a single or a double agency—the object of legislation for India should be to ensure that the authority which has to decide in the last resort, should be adequately qualified for that high func-



tion. By the present constitution of the Board of Control, the President is *primus inter pares*, with a casting vote. Make it imperative that a certain number of his colleagues should have peculiar qualifications, and you have at once either a good revising Board, or a good organ of Government. The members of such a Board would have as real a share in the Home government as the Members of the Council of India have in the Government abroad; nay, a larger share; for though it be advisable that the Governor-General, who is often called upon for prompt decision and prompt action, should be able to act upon his own responsibility in opposition to his Council, yet no such power can be required for one whose main duty it is to review acts already done.

If it be thought that the advantage of filtering some of these proceedings through two sets of minds, overbalances the enormous waste of time and money which such a practice involves, nothing can be easier than to have a certain number of Directors employed in initiating dispatches for the consideration of the Supreme Board.

Thirty Directors are now maintained, twenty-four in *esse* and six in *posse*, not because that number is necessary for conducting the public business, but as safe channels for the distribution of patronage. By selecting as many as might be required for the work of government, paying them well, and leaving the patronage with the remainder, subject to the strict supervision of the governing body, we should in the first place get rid of that which operates more banefully upon the prospects, character, and well-being of the natives of India than any other thing, viz. the payment of the executive body by patronage, which has therefore a direct interest, in maintaining patronage at its present level; and power, in a certain degree, of extending it beyond that level.

By depriving the Executive of patronage, we should extinguish the interest which it now has in extending territory; we should get rid of the startling anomaly, and the practical inconvenience of allowing the Court of Directors, which the law has stripped of all other power, the power of recalling at its pleasure the Governor-General, who is not only virtually named by the Crown, but is so named, because he stands high in the confidence of the Crown; a power only vindicated because the Government of India is in name vested in the East India Company; we should get rid of those

awkward collisions which reduce conscientious men to the necessity of preferring a jail to the enforcement of what they consider unjust orders. We should greatly facilitate public business. We should fix responsibility. We should save time and money. A saving of twenty or thirty thousand pounds a year is thought to be a trifling matter, but as twenty or thirty thousand pounds would purchase five times the labour or food in India that the same sum would command in England, that amount represents many miles of railroad made every year.

Those who advocate the continuance of the present system, do in effect declare it to be fitting, that a Minister of the Crown should be enabled, at his discretion, to exercise despotic authority over the great empire of India, and that he should exercise that power in a mask. Would not the India Committees be in a much better position to form a judgment upon this question, and to discharge the duty devolved upon them by Parliament, if, instead of gathering vague opinions from those who cannot be considered as altogether without bias, they were to establish facts, by consulting records. The publication of the proceedings of the Court of Directors, and of the Court of Proprietors, in all cases of controversy with the Board of Control, would afford much better evidence of the working of the whole system, than mere opinions of individuals on one side or the other. And surely it is right that the public should know exactly the respective parts which the two actors play in the great Indian drama: that they should know, for instance, who was the mover, and who the seconder of a measure which was considered by the Directors so "grossly unjust," that they were ready rather to go to jail than participate in it.

It is the more necessary that the public should have this information, as the case here referred to must have been a singular one indeed, to have driven the Directors into this attitude of sturdy resistance; for when the affairs of India were before Parliament some twenty years ago, they were in the act of yielding to a mandamus from the Court of King's Bench, which compelled them to promulgate as their own, the orders of the Board of Control in the matter of the creditors of the State of Hyderabad, which they considered as "grossly unjust;" and they were prepared to yield to

the same compulsion in the matter of the creditors of the King of Oude, if the Board of Control had not seen fit to withdraw its orders.\*

It is the Directors only who see merits in a system which may at any time, and which actually does sometimes compel them to violate their consciences by signing orders which they consider to be "grossly unjust," or to go to jail for disobedience. It is exclusively upon the testimony of the principal officers of the India House that the system is favourably reported of. A laboured attempt has, indeed, lately been made to enlist Lord Hardinge's evidence in its favour,† and to shew that his Lordship's opinion is in collision with that of his predecessor; but if such were really the case, it would not aid the cause; because as Governors-General—*quasi* Governors-General—know nothing of the working of the Home Government, we should have on one side an ex-Governor-General speaking without experience in advocacy of the system of double agency; on the other, an ex-Governor-General, of more experience than any other living individual, in condemnation of it. But while Lord Hardinge gives a naked opinion in favour of the system, his Lordship incidentally mentions a fact which emphatically condemns it. "At present," says Lord Hardinge,‡ "it is a mystery not understood by the public, why the Board of Control should give an order to the Secret Committee"—and he adduces as an instance of this an "officer of very high position and ability in India" having written a

\* The glaring evils of the present system are most ably exposed by the Directors themselves in their correspondence with the Board of Control on these cases. Their remedy for these evils was a legislative provision, by which the Board should be compelled to give publicity to all the proceedings in such cases. The Board of course scouted such a notion, observing, that the Court had, like all other subjects, the privilege of petitioning Parliament against those proceedings whenever they chose; and that the Court were already, for all "practical purposes," invested with "*sufficient powers*." These "*sufficient powers*" being an obligation to promulgate, as their own, all the "*views and opinions*" of the Board, however contrary they might consider them to be "to good government or wholesome rule." See letter from the Court of Directors to the Rt. Hon. Charles Grant, 1st March, 1833. Letter of Rt. Hon. Charles Grant to Court of Directors, 4th of June, 1833. Papers respecting pecuniary claims on Native Princes, and "*Negotiation Papers*."

† See Morning Chronicle of 22nd October. ‡ Commons' Evidence, p. 255.

letter, couched "in somewhat indignant terms,"\* to the President of the Board of Control, complaining of the conduct of the Secret Committee; and it was not until warned by Lord Hardinge that the President was, in fact, the Secret Committee, and that the obnoxious letter had in consequence emanated from him, that the writer was made aware of the scrape into which he was about to plunge himself. "This officer," says his Lordship, "did not understand the mystery of the President of the Board of Control being in fact the Secret Committee. It is, however, a convenient arrangement, and a much wiser system, than bringing the Crown more prominently forward."

Convenient, no doubt, that a minister of the Crown should be able to rebuke an "officer of very high position in India," by a letter couched in such terms as to call forth an indignant remonstrance—in the names of other parties! We have been taught, that the less mystery there is in a Government the better; and it is a constitutional maxim, that every public officer in this country, should be made to authenticate his own acts, in order that he may be made responsible for them. We have yet to learn why mysteries and irresponsibilities, which are reprobated in the Government of England, should be wholesome in the Government of India. The convenience to the parties who work this mystery is quite another question.

When we find Lord Ellenborough avowing that when he was at the head of the Board of Control, he governed India absolutely, without even consulting the Prime Minister. When we find Mr. Wynn, another ex-president, warning the House of Commons, that Parliament had vested the Government of India, not in the East India Company, but in the Board of Control; and that, in that body, the real effective Government of India had for the last half century resided. When we hear a third ex-president, Sir John Hobhouse, using the same language; when we hear Mr. Courtenay, an ex-secretary of the Board of Control, avowing that, in his opinion, the oath taken by that body makes it imperative for them to govern India, just as if no subordinate body existed; with these proofs of the existing "prominence" of the Crown in the Government of

\* Commons' Evidence, p. 253.

India; can we hesitate to say, that the sooner the mask is removed, and the real regulator of the Indian Empire is made its ostensible ruler, the better?

And if we had not the avowal from those who have worn the mask, that this is the real position of the President of the Board of Control, we should find abundant proof of it in the evidence of a Director—Colonel Sykes,\* who, while he considers a “Board of Control essentially necessary,” as part of the machinery for the good government of India, doubts whether “his formidable power in political matters is in accordance with the free institutions of this country.” For in the exercise of it, he may “dip into the Home Treasury” for political objects, unknown to the Court of Directors. He and the Governor-General, by combining together may enable that officer completely to control the Court, by acting in direct opposition to the known sentiments of the Court. If the Court had been allowed a voice in the matter, the Afghan war, in Colonel Sykes’ opinion, would perhaps not have taken place;† but the Court knew nothing officially of Afghan affairs, until about three years after the war had commenced.‡

They have no knowledge whatever of the origin, progress, or present state of the Burmese war. “I have twice asked for the papers, and I have been given to understand, that it was not thought desirable to communicate them to the Court. When the President of the Board of Control sends any order, he does not ask the Secret Committee upon it, but merely sends the order;” and this order upon being carried out, “might disorder the finances of India,” or it “might affect a native sovereign,” or “might touch a chord of sympathy in a whole people, and be exceedingly dangerous in its results.” And yet it is this Court, which is thus kept in utter ignorance of matters of vital importance to India, that is said to govern India; this is the system which is upheld upon the single plea, that it ensures a thorough sifting of all proceedings of the Indian Government by a double set of minds. The Secret Committee—which is, in fact, a mere post-office for transmitting the dispatches of the President—

\* Commons’ Evidence, p. 173.

† Page 171.

‡ Mr. Melville says, “There has not been a single instance in which the Directors, as a body, have protested against the orders of the Board,” p. 27. The reason is plain; officially they know nothing of such orders, whenever the Board chooses to bring the Secret Department into play.

and two or three confidential clerks, are the only persons privy to the contents of those dispatches, which relate to war, peace, treaties, the rights and properties of native princes, and other questions in which the interests and feelings of the people of India may be deeply involved, and yet with this proof of the existence of a power on the part of the President, to exclude the Directors, from all knowledge of most important branches of the affairs of India—a power, which we see, has been in frequent exercise, and which is at this moment in exercise; it is gravely pretended that they have as large a share in the government of India as they would have if they were to sit at the same Council Board with the President, having cognizance of, and a vote upon all his proceedings. Any change indeed that would place them in this position, is deprecated by Mr. Mill. With far more truth might it be asserted, that the secretaries in India, have a substantial share in the government, because they have, in fact, the same initiating power as the Court of Directors, dispatches in all departments being prepared by them, and passed in a vast majority of instances without alteration by the Government Board.

The two remedies for these flagrant evils, as suggested by Colonel Sykes, are, that the Secret Committee should have the power of recording their opinions upon secret dispatches—that they should have the power of consulting their colleagues upon the subject of such dispatches, a knowledge, that the majority of the Court consisting of men well versed in the affairs of India, was hostile to a proposed measure, might, Colonel Sykes thinks, have an influence upon the President's mind, at all events, "if he did carry out his measure against the adverse opinion of the Chair, and of competent members of the Court, it would necessarily enhance his responsibility, instead of diminishing it."

Now, as upon all questions, not recorded in the Secret Department, the President has before him the opinions of the Court, this recommendation, that he should have their opinions in the matters excepted, seems, to be saying in almost so many words, that it is desirable the President should, on all occasions, have a Council of competent persons to advise him.

The President of the Board now "thinks his own opinion, and the opinion of his political officers as good as the Chairman and the

members of the Secret Committee, but he would not think so, probably, if the Chairman and Deputy had the power of asking their colleagues in the Court, more experienced in the affairs of India, and acquainted with the feelings of the people, what their opinion was, and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman went back and told the President, and said to him, such and such are the opinions of our colleagues” •

But this surely is going a roundabout way to procure an imperfect remedy, when you may obtain a radical cure by a short cut. Place the Government in a President in Council, under a Commission from the Crown, restricting the choice of the Council, as proposed by Lord Ellenborough, and the object is effectually accomplished. Or link on the Government of India to the general Government of the country, by giving the Crown the nomination of the Chairman and Deputy of the Court of Directors, leaving the Chairman to choose, by recommendation to the Crown, a Cabinet from the twenty-four Directors, cutting off the remaining Directors from the Executive Government, and erecting them into a “Court of Patronage,”—the object would be less perfectly attained, but it would be attained without any disturbance of vested interest.

Or if it be thought advisable to maintain the Directors—not of the Cabinet, as Committees,—to assist in the preparation of business for the Cabinet, we should still be able to dispense with the duplicate system, with its anomalies, irresponsibilities, and expense. When we see, from the detail given by Colonel Sykes,\* “that in no Government upon earth, are all questions that may arise more thoroughly sifted than Indian questions are by the Committee of Directors at the India House;” that the strongest guarantees are afforded by the system followed there; that all subjects that come before it are “thoroughly sifted and investigated;” that the same subjects undergo a second examination in the aggregate Court; we shall be driven to our wits end to assign, even a plausible reason, for a rewinnowing of all these matters at the West End. But if such a reason can be found, surely the most effectual way of attaining the object would be by bringing the two establishments under the same roof, and working them under one head.

When we find that the business of India has enormously increased

since its affairs" were last before Parliament—that the dispatches from India had increased from 602 in 1830, to 2445 in 1849;\* the "previous communications" between the Court and the Board from 173 to 404; and the collections of papers belonging thereto from 103,710 to 212,075; we shall see how vastly the public business would be facilitated by substituting a system of free oral communication for one of voluminous writing. By amalgamating the two Boards we should at once get rid of the 200,000 pages of "collections."

By this arrangement we should secure what is said to be the main advantage of the present system, viz. the thorough sifting by two sets of minds—with two sets of subordinates, of all proceedings of the Indian Government, that are not recorded in the Secret Department; with this marked improvement in it, that the two sets of minds would be equally competent to the work. One set of subordinates under Committees composed of Directors, would prepare dispatches for the consideration of the President and Council, who would decide upon them. One set of records would serve, where two are now necessary, free oral communication would be substituted for voluminous writing; we should at once get rid of the two hundred thousand pages, which are now periodically sent out from the India House to the Board of Control; we should be rid of all "convenient mysteries;" public officers in India would no longer, in their bewilderment, complain to the President of the Board of Control against the President of the Board of Control, thinking all the time, that they were complaining to the principal against his subordinates; and lastly, we should have a really responsible organ of government. The East India Company, with a Cabinet Minister at its head, would be really trustees for the Crown in the Government of India; their voice in the affairs of India would be dominant and exclusive; for what sort of trust is that, which not only denies the trustees all liberty of action, but which compels them to act in the matters committed to their trust, occasionally in direct opposition to their own judgment and consciences? Lastly, this arrangement might be made without any other disturbance of the present system, than the placing of the two departments in India Government under one roof.

\* Commons' Evidence, page 41.



This proposal is based upon the assumption, that it is either proved, or proveable, that a more elaborate, and a more costly apparatus is necessary, for commenting upon, and criticising the proceedings of the India Government, than is required for originating those proceedings. We entrust the whole Government in India to a Commission, consisting of a President in Council. What that authority does seldom admits of being undone; a pretty heavy burden of proof therefore seems to rest upon those who maintain that we want more than a similar agency for reviewing its acts.

"The great security for the good government of any country," says Mr. Mill,\* "is an enlightened public opinion." But public opinion in India is altogether stifled, not only is the Government itself in the hands of foreigners, but all the principal instruments of that Government are foreigners. It is with these foreign instruments that the foreign Government hold exclusive communication. The voice of the people of India is never heard in the Councils of India. The wide gulf which separates the European from the native, prevents any intimate relations between them. "The civil servants of the Company," says the highest of Indian authorities,† "mix but little with the native community; they have no common interest with it. In other countries Government and its officers are a part of the community, and are of course, acquainted with the effect of every public measure, and the opinion of the country regarding it; but here Government is deprived of this advantage; it makes laws for a people who have no voice in the matter, and of whom it knows very little, and it is therefore evident that it cannot adapt its laws to the circumstances of the people unless it receives accurate information upon this subject from active and intelligent local officers."

Austria and Russia, who have no representative institutions, derive their acquaintance of public opinion from the public officers employed in the administration; and we have only to give the natives a fair share in the government of their own country, to ensure the same result. "But," says Mr. Mill,‡ "although the natives are legally eligible, they are practically disqualified for such a trust, and so they must be until they are very much improved in character." "If," says Mr. Melville,§ "the natives were competent from their moral qualities and from education to fill offices under the Government, their exclusion would be a practical wrong." How strangely

\* Page 301.

† Sir T. Munro.

‡ Page 324.

§ Page 353.

does this language of Messrs. Mill and Melville contrast with that of Munro and Malcolm and Metcalfe? With those who have spent their lives amongst the natives, the language is that of appreciation and confidence; with those who speak of them from hearsay, it is that of depreciation and distrust. How strongly does it contrast with that of the illustrious man whom we have just lost. His Indian Dispatches abound in eulogiums upon the natives who were employed under him in the public service; he speaks with the highest admiration of the civil administration of Poorneah, the Regent of Mysore, of the diplomatic talents and services of Govind Rao; of the military qualifications and strict integrity of Bisanpant, and the names of these individuals, will go down to posterity in his pages, and yet Poorneah who had been the principal minister of Hyder and Tippoo, and who ruled Mysore for eleven years, in a manner that called forth the admiration of the Duke of Wellington would, for want of "moral qualities," be debarred from holding a higher office under our Government than that of Judge of a County Court, and Bisanpant, who had commanded armies under those princes, and who commanded 3000 horse, in such a way as to call forth the highest praise of the great Captain, would be placed under the youngest European ensign, and be ineligible to a higher command than that of a company of Sepoys; and this is thought to be a system good for the natives and good for us, calculated to improve their character, and to consolidate our power.

"Our first and chief duty," says Mr. Melville,\* "is to provide the natives of India with a good Government, but they are incapable from their moral qualities and education, from taking a prominent part in that Government." How then was India governed before we appeared upon the scene? Was India then like New Zealand? Was there no Civil Government under the Moghul Emperors, no revenue settlements—no dispensation of justice—no administration of police—no system of finance under Acbar and Shah Jehan; were all who wore turbans deficient in qualifications for government? "Neither we nor our subjects," says a very competent judge,† "would have any reason to complain if we could govern India as well as it was governed by Acbar." India, under its native rulers was fertile in warriors and statesmen, we take care that it shall produce none in our days, for

\* P. 53.

† The late Sir Henry Russell.

we shut them out from all high employment, upon the pretext that they want "integrity and trustworthiness." This is stereotyped language at the India House, and more than thirty years ago it was thus indignantly rebuked by Sir Thomas Munro: "Those who speak," said he, "of the natives, as men utterly unworthy of trust, who are not influenced by ambition, or by the love of honourable distinction, and who have no other passion than that of gain, describe a race of men that nowhere exists, and which if it did exist would scarcely deserve to be protected. But if we are sincere in our wishes to protect and render them justice, we ought to believe that they deserve it. We cannot easily bring ourselves to take much interest in what we despise, and regard as unworthy. The higher the opinion we have of the natives, the more likely we shall be to govern them well, because we shall then think them worthy of our attention. With what grace can we speak of our paternal Government, if we exclude them from every important office. \* \* \* Such an interdiction is to pass a sentence of degradation on a whole people, for which no benefit can compensate." Those who pass this sentence seem to forget that European integrity and trustworthiness was purchased. The main reason assigned by Lord Cornwallis, for placing the salaries of Europeans upon their present munificent scale, was to put a stop to the practice of illicit gains.

Both Mr. Melville and Mr. Mill admit, that the natives are already employed in offices which require the highest integrity and trustworthiness, viz. the administration of justice to an extent, that throws considerably more than 90 per cent of the whole business of that department into the hands of native judges. The question then is, not whether they have "integrity" enough to be entrusted with such duties, but whether they are to be adequately remunerated in money and rank. But, say they, they act under strict European supervision. Now, as such an assertion is calculated to mislead public opinion, and to leave an impression that a native judge is strictly watched by an European judge, and that without this vigilant check he would go astray, it is necessary to correct it.\* The native judge then, is under the surveillance of the European judge, just in the same degree that the judge of the County Court in this country is under the eye of the Court of Queen's Bench, that is to

\* Mr. Melville, indeed, corrects himself, and destroys his own argument, when he says—"There are some judicial offices in Bengal in which a native Judge acts and decides, without reference to an European, even in cases of appeal." It is not true, then, by his own shewing, that "natives, however employed, still require the check of vigilant European superintendence."—p. 53—56.

say, in certain cases, an appeal lies to the European judge against his decisions. In the original adjudication of such suits, he is free from all control. Their original jurisdiction extends to all suits, and the value of suits actually settled in the years 1848-9, by native judges, in Bengal alone, considerably exceeded seven millions sterling, and it is very remarkable that one of the reasons assigned by Sir Thomas Munro for instituting the office of native judge was, that we might have a native judicial officer exercising his judgment independent of European control.\* The first native judge ever appointed was accordingly located where no other European functionary resided. "At present," he said, "the highest native officers in the judicial department, act immediately under the eye of the European judge," their "office, though no doubt respectable, is still very subordinate. Every time that a native is raised to a higher office than had before been filled by any of his countrymen, a new impulse will be given to the whole establishment, the hope of attaining the higher office will excite emulation among those who hold the inferior ones, and improve the whole. But this improvement will take place in a much higher degree, when the new office is one of a high and *independent* nature like that of a judge. The person who is appointed to it will be conscious, that he enjoys some share in the administration of the affairs of his country—he will feel that his own rank and character have been elevated by his having been selected for the high office which he holds, and his feelings will pervade every class of the department "to which he belongs." "We ought to look forward to a time when natives may be employed in almost every office, however high, and we ought to prepare them gradually for such a change, by entrusting them with higher duties from time to time, in proportion as experience may prove their being qualified to discharge them."

We have had the experience of a quarter of a century, since these words were written; an experience most favourable to the native character, but in the eyes of those with whom their destiny rests, they are still without those "moral qualities," which would fit them for offices of dignity and emolument. May we not say, without offence, that they never will have those qualities, so long as the executive Government in India is paid by patronage?

The patronage, Mr. Melville tells us,† "is indispensable to the Court of Directors, in order to enable it to maintain its position in the eyes of the public, and the exercise of that patronage, moreover, keeps up a sympathy between the persons entrusted with a share in the Government of India; and the persons in India who are dis-

\* Life, vol. 2, p. 423.

† Lords' Evidence, p. 25.

charging important duties there, and that sympathy and communication seems to me to be calculated to be of great service to the Court of Directors."

But the object is, not that there should be sympathy between the European patrons and their clients, but that there should be a community of interest between the Governors and the governed. That the Governors should have no interests which are antagonistic to the rightful claims of their subjects. The question then is, not what appearance the patronage may enable the Directors to make in the eyes of the British public, or of what service it may be to them, but how the exercise of it operates upon the character and prospects of their subjects, and this question Mr. Melville seems to answer, when he says,\* If you were once to open the "covenanted" service to natives, that is, if you open offices to natives which are now exclusively held by Europeans, there would be no stopping them in their career. There would be no "harm in a native of India filling the situation of assistant magistrate, collector, or judge; in fact, they do now discharge the duties of such offices, though in a separate grade; but if they were in the covenanted service, filling those situations, when vacancies occurred they must be promoted to the higher situations." "This," he says, "would be to infringe upon a principle which has been established, viz. 'native agency, and European supervision and control,' the breaking in upon this principle would destroy that 'deference' which natives ought to entertain for Europeans, and the result of such a measure might be the throwing the whole government of India into the hands of natives." But Mr. Melville has told us that to exclude natives from any office which they are competent to fill, would be a "practical wrong," that the only bar to their admission to higher offices is want of education and moral qualities. Here then he raises fresh barriers against them,—whatever their competence may be,—you are not to push them up one step, for fear they should get to the top. They may have the "moral qualities" that are required, but to admit a native into the lowest office now held by Europeans, would be to infringe upon a "principle." By giving the natives a share of that which is now exclusively held by Europeans, "the salutary deference now paid to Europeans would be weakened, if not annihilated."† The natives, therefore, are in a sad plight. They may get over

\* Lords' Evidence, p. 55.

† Ibid. p. 53.

‡ P. 53.

those defects in character and education which is said to be the sole cause of their exclusion ; but they cannot break down a "principle." Mr. Melville, however, consoles them by saying that the question is "only one of time,"\* and that "to accelerate it might be prejudicial to the natives themselves, and injurious to the Government." But how so ? The "principle" which keeps them out of high office will be as inflexible fifty years hence as it is now ; it will be as necessary then as it is now to maintain a "salutary deference" to Europeans ; we shall be as little prepared at a distant period to surrender the whole Government to the natives as we are at this moment. And the truth is, that the language which Mr. Melville, and others who think with him, now hold, is just the language that has been held on the subject from time immemorial. There has always been an exuberant profession of a desire of doing a great deal for the natives at a fitting season, but a very scanty performance. For example,

\* Mr. Melville is asked what he means, when he says, that the time is "approaching" when natives may be freely admitted into office, and answers, "when the natives shall have greatly advanced in civilization and intelligence, and their moral qualities shall have improved ; all which could not fail to be the case, if it should ever happily occur that *Christianity were universally diffused throughout India*," p. 58. The "approaching time," therefore, turns out to be, humanly speaking, the time of the Greek Kalends. Do we want further proof, that so long as "patronage is indispensable" to the Executive, the native will always be wanting in those "moral qualities," which can alone make them fit recipients of it ? Was Mr. Melville thinking of the natives of "New Guinea" or of the "New Hebrides," when he gave this answer ? It is akin to an opinion of the Company's historian, that the "inaptitude of the natives for the subordinate offices which they fill, is one serious impediment to the good government of India." *Thornton's History*, vol. v. p. 187. What would become of the poor natives if we were to legislate upon these opinions ? Disqualified, according to Mr. Melville, for the superior offices ; unfit, according to Mr. Thornton, for the subordinate ones. The following opinion of Hindoo "civilization and intelligence," not derived at second hand, like that of Mr. Melville, is worth quoting here.

"I do not exactly understand what is meant by the civilization of the Hindoos. In the higher branches of science ; in the knowledge of the theory and practice of good government, and in an education which, by banishing prejudice and superstition, open the mind to receive instruction of every kind from every quarter, they are much inferior to Europeans : but if a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to convenience or luxury ; schools established in every village, for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic ; the general practice of hospitality and charity among each other ; and above all, a treatment of the female sex, full of confidence, respect, and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilized people, then the Hindoos are not inferior to the nations of Europe, and if civilization is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced, that this country will gain by the import cargo."—*Evidence of Colonel, afterwards Sir Thomas Munro, before the House of Commons in 1813.*

the highest office that a native can now hold, as Mr. Melville tells us, is that of Principal Sudr Aumeen; but this very grade was opened to them by Sir Thomas Munro as long ago as 1827, and in Bengal by Lord W. Bentinck a year or two afterwards, and though many natives have been appointed to that grade since that time, none of them have been elevated beyond it; and at this moment, in the Madras Presidency, whilst there are from 200 to 250 European officers, holding offices with salaries of from £300 to £6000 a year, there are about 20 natives, whose salaries range from £5 to £800.

The "principle," indeed, which prevents the native from encroaching upon the European manor is neither more or less than an ingenious contrivance for perpetually monopolizing all the best offices in European hands upon the plea that whilst "moral qualities" are always to be found under a hat, you may look for them in vain under a turban.\* It is easy for us to say this, and alas! but too easy for us to act upon it; for the hundred millions who are thus branded have no voice in the question. Sir Thomas Munro knew nothing of this principle of exclusion, when he proposed, thirty years ago, to admit natives to all offices for which they should prove themselves to be qualified. Neither did Sir Charles Metcalfe, when he proposed to supply the proved deficiencies of European officers by calling in natives. Neither of these great and experienced statesmen saw any danger to our ascendancy from breaking down the barrier which separates the European from the native; neither did they think that we should exalt the European in the eyes of the native by a system which, whether he is competent or not, secures to the one all the high offices, and leaves only the low ones to the other.

Whether competent or not, for we have in 1852 the very same language, on this branch of the subject that was held in 1832. "Is not it extremely difficult to find Europeans qualified to hold the higher offices in India?" is a question put to Mr. Bird.\* The answer is, Yes—there is "a greater paucity of men of distinction in the services of India than there was."

\* Natives might point to the high "moral qualities" which were manifested by the former Directors of the "Union Bank" of Calcutta, and ask us to point to a similar example of turpitude amongst natives.

† See Lords' Evidence, p. 118.

Greater, we must suppose than there was twenty years ago, when Sir Charles Metcalfe complained of it; and when one of the reasons assigned for the abolition of a high office,\* was the difficulty of finding Europeans who were qualified to fill it. Whence arises the difficulty?—because we have only Europeans to choose from, when we might make a selection from a hundred millions of natives. “If unqualified Europeans are sent out,” says Mr. Bird, “they do more harm than good.”† More harm, because when once there, they must be promoted to high office, whether qualified or not, and as the very last on the Haileybury College list, are sent out as well as the prizemen and medallists, the chances are, that whilst all may be honourable and upright, many will not be competent to fill the higher offices. Not competent, because it will be easy to shew, that in the administration of India, more mischief may be done by an alliance between honesty and ignorance, than by a union of cupidity with intelligence. Take a case, which as regards the native, must by all parties, be regarded as an extreme one.

Suppose a European, with unswerving probity, and with but a scanty knowledge of the language, manners and feelings of the native character, administering justice amongst a people, who in matters of religion, or caste, or brotherhood, think it as meritorious to serve their “Church” by perjury, as any disciple of “Loyola.” Suppose, what is constantly the case, that to discriminate between truth and falsehood, a knowledge of their peculiar customs and prejudices, by which their evidence is likely to be biassed, is absolutely necessary, that the value of a native’s evidence, constantly depends upon niceties of language, upon his voice, his manner and mode of expressing himself. The upright but imperfectly informed European Judge, with the best intentions, will be more in danger of doing injustice amongst such a people, than the venal native Judge, because when in difficulties, which he constantly is, the European must turn for help to his native officials, and they are just as open to corruption, as the native Judge who does all his business without such aid. For no truth can be more glaring than this, though it may be an unpalatable one, that the European officer in India, when left to himself, is the most helpless of animals, that though the natives

\* Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit.

† P. 118.



may govern India as they did for ages, without the aid of Europeans, Europeans could not govern India a day without the aid of natives. Hence arises the fact, which Sir Charles Metcalfe states to be notorious, that the whole business is sometimes done by natives, whilst Europeans have the credit of it.

But if a return to a call for a statement of the number of European and native Judges who have been charged with official delinquencies within a given period, should be *nil* in both instances, what inference should we be warranted in drawing from such a fact but that the grant of liberal salaries has had precisely the same effect upon native officials as it has had upon European? \* And with this testimony before us, that they have been eminently trustworthy in all that has been committed to them, are we not bound, upon our own principles, to trust them more? That we are driven to our wits' end for a reason for not following this course, is manifest from the opinion of one who, whilst he speaks of the native Judges, into whose hands almost the whole of the judicial administration of the lower Courts has fallen, in the highest terms as trustworthy and valuable servants, without whose aid we could not govern the country, yet deprecates their admission into the higher grades of office upon the plea that such promotion would render them discontented with their present condition, and that in attempting to elevate we should really humiliate them. † We have been taught to think that one of the surest incentives to good conduct is the hope of reward—that the sure way to break a subaltern's heart is to say, that he shall be a subaltern for ever. That if there should be a wide gulf, social and political, between two races,—the social gulf being absolutely impassable,—the only way by which you can alleviate the evil, is by raising the depressed race, in the political scale; and that, applying the principle to the case before us, “every time a native is raised to

\* “Q. Was it not one of Lord Cornwallis' reasons for considerably augmenting the salaries of the civil servants, that by so doing you would render them more honest than they had been at any former period?—A. Yes.” *Lords' Evidence*, p. 119.

† “Q. 1187. The question is this, do you conceive that the exclusion of the natives in India, by reason of this distinction between the covenanted and uncovenanted service, is expedient to be preserved to the present extent and degree?”

a higher office than has been filled by any of his countrymen, a new impulse is given to the whole body." But here we have very different teaching: the best way of making a native satisfied with his subordinate lot, is, it appears, to assure him that it shall never be improved. The native whom Mr. Melville tells us\* has been appointed a Judge of the Small Cause Court at Calcutta, has been humiliated by his elevation: he is at a greater distance from his brother European Judges now that he sits with them, than he was when he sat under them; and the native officer who ~~has~~ taken his place, will do his subordinate duties with less satisfaction now that the prospect of reward is before him than he would have done if he had been excluded from all hope of obtaining such reward.

"Yes, I think it is; the proper object of the uncovenanted service is to act in subordination to the covenanted. \* \* \* \* \*

To explain what I mean, there is a Medical College at Calcutta, which I hope will furnish a sufficient body of medical men in time to supply the wants of India, and those young men have exhibited such attainments that many people have thought it advisable to have them sent out as surgeons on the Establishment. I have always opposed that idea, for this reason, that the object of educating medical men in India is for the purpose of acting in subordination to the medical men acting at home, who are sent out by the Court of Directors; whereas if the hope is held out to them of being placed upon the covenanted establishment, *they would not perform the duties with the same satisfaction.* \* \* \* \*

Whether it would be expedient or advisable to destroy their utility as a subordinate race of medical practitioners for such a country as India, by giving them the *hope and expectation of still higher promotion I very much doubt.*

"Q. 1200. Do you think that there are any sound political objections to the employment of natives in the highest offices of the state in India; that is to say, appointing them originally as writers, and letting them rise with Europeans to the highest offices in India?

"I do not know whether you would call it a political objection, but I suppose it is understood here that the Europeans mix very little with the natives; consequently the natives *so appointed would be exposed to a great deal of personal humiliation*; but otherwise, on other grounds, I cannot say that I am prepared yet to admit them in the highest situations in India; I think they require to be kept in a certain degree of subordination. They are very much given to think themselves qualified for any situation. Most of the men who have been educated in the colleges fancy themselves capable of much more than they really are."—*Lords' Evidence*, p. 116-117.

\* \* \* \* \* *Lords' Evidence*, p. 49.

Is it presumptuous to say, that a cause which requires to be prop-  
 ped by such reasoning as this, is essentially a rotten cause? To say  
 that you exclude the natives from high office, in consequence of de-  
 fects in their moral character, is one thing, to say, that you exclude  
 them because it would be inconvenient, and might be dangerous to  
 elevate them, is another; and would it not be more manly to tell  
 them at once, that the distinction between "covenanted and uncove-  
 nanted"—that is, their perpetual exclusion from the higher classes  
 of office ~~must~~<sup>shall</sup> be maintained, because Europeans have need of  
 those offices, than to cast a slur upon a whole people, by pretending  
 that we have the will to surrender such offices, but that they must  
 be a better race than they now are, before we can venture to make  
 the sacrifice?

But Mr. Melville tells us that the natives must be "educated"  
 before we should be warranted in making such a sacrifice. Mr. Bird,  
 however, assures us that education has had no other effect upon those  
 natives than to make them conceited: "They are very much given  
 to think themselves qualified for any situation. Most of the men  
 who have been educated in the colleges fancy themselves capable of  
 much more than they really are." The poor natives are again in a  
 cleft stick. Uneducated, they are ineligible; educated, they are as  
 far from their object as ever. But if the education which they now  
 receive fails to qualify them for the public service, is the fault theirs?  
 If we insist upon it that a knowledge of Shakspeare and Bacon is  
 necessary for those who have to administer justice amongst a simple,  
 agricultural community, to catch thieves, to settle and collect the re-  
 venue, can we wonder that natives who may have spent years in get-  
 ting even a smattering of English literature, should at their exit from  
 the Calcutta College, be as unfit for those duties as when they entered  
 it? The qualifications that are required for the discharge of the  
 duties of a Provincial Officer in India are a familiar acquaintance with  
 two or three of the native languages, great expertness in arithmetic,  
 an intimate knowledge of the tenures upon which the land is held, and  
 an acquaintance as familiar, with the history, religion, habits, customs,  
 and prejudices of the people. These are indispensable qualifications  
 which the native uneducated, in our sense of the word, possesses in

an eminent degree, and of which the European knows but little. Who is conceited then? he who in the partial possession of such qualifications thinks himself fit for any trust in India; or he who possessing an abundance of them, presumes to think that he at least has equal pretensions? Poorneah, to whom the Duke of Wellington gave his picture as a testimony of his sense of the benefits which the public had derived from his administration of a kingdom, though a highly accomplished native, would, in our sense of the word, have been considered "uneducated," and conceited too, if he had aspired, under British rule to the management of a province.

Mr. Bird, indeed, admits,\* that he has known some natives whom he thinks might have been promoted "to the upper class of the judicial establishments;—that many natives have attained to such skill and ability in the medical profession, and are in such request amongst their countrymen, as to make it worth their while to decline employment in the public service, in order that they may engage in private practice." Sir Herbert Maddock† again tells us, "that there are numbers of highly educated and well-informed persons (natives) of rank and influence, who are admirably calculated to be selected to perform the functions of a consultative legislative Committee."

The ground, then, upon which we pretend to exclude the natives from higher offices, viz. their want of education and moral qualities, is thus cut from under us. Is there any real warrant for the apprehension which Mr. Melville expresses, that if we once open the door to them, we shall be unable to shut it? What is this but to say, that if we try the natives in high office, they will prove themselves to be able to work the whole machine of Government so efficiently and so economically, that we should be constrained to surrender the whole civil administration to them? No such result is to be apprehended or to be desired. Would the appointment of one or two natives to that Council which makes laws, and imposes taxes upon a hundred millions of their countrymen, have that tendency? Would the advancement of those natives whom Mr. Bird pronounces to be competent to the higher judicial offices bring out such a result? or would it be seriously forwarded if we were to appoint those natives

\* *Lords' Evidence*, p. 117.

† *Ibid.* p. 230.

whose medical skill commands the confidence of their countrymen, to the medical charge of the native regiments? If we answer these questions in the negative—if we say that we cannot afford to give to the natives of India—Hindoo, Mahommedan, Parsee—the same share, or something like the same share that the Hindoos had in the government of their country when the Mussulman was master of it, then we deliberately violate what Mr. Melville affirms to be our first duty, viz. to govern India “for the benefit of the people of that country.” We shall do them what he admits to be a “practical wrong;” we shall exclude them from offices for which they are competent.

But Mr. Melville frightens us again by saying, that, if we admit natives to civil offices, in violation of the principle of separation which now obtains, we must violate it in the military department, and that this “might ultimately involve the placing of regiments under the command of natives.” But because you make one native a Judge, does it follow that you must make another a Commanding officer? No, you oblige the military native by elevating his civil fellow countryman in the scale, although you may be obliged to leave him where he is; and is it not clear, that just in proportion as there may be reasons for confining the one within a narrow sphere, are the reasons for enlarging the sphere of the other? Recollecting that in our early struggles for dominion, under Lawrence and Clive, when our native troops were constantly in the habit of coming into collision with the French, our Sepoys were commanded in a succession of campaigns exclusively by a native,\* who was equally honoured as a soldier and a statesman. Recollecting that at this moment those regiments with very few European officers are as distinguished as those who have many, can any adequate reason be given, why a distinguished native officer should not be allowed to command a native pensioned regiment or a hill fortress, a trust that was confided to him by the late Sir John Malcolm, and disallowed by the authorities at home?

But, if these things cannot be, the greater the necessity for what evidently can be, if we will it; and the first step towards that object would be, to compensate those who have now the dispensation of their patronage by adequate salaries, in order that we might, without injury to any one, curtail the initiatory civil and medical patronage.

\* Mohamed Issoof.

The next would be a scheme of compensation to the Civil and Medical Services abroad, for the loss they would sustain if natives were freely admitted into those services. To blast, or in any way damage the prospects of those services, without such compensation, would be the height of injustice, but it would be no injustice to attempt to thin those services, by offering to such as might be willing to retire adequate pensions upon a graduated scale. Many who are only young in the service, many whose health is infirm, and many who are anxious, at almost any price, to get out of the country, would readily embrace the offer. By filling up vacancies thus made with natives, we should have, what is the great desideratum, a mixed administration, natives assisting Europeans, and Europeans infusing English blood into the natives; we should break down that pernicious "principle" which enacts, that Europeans shall always be at the top, and natives at the bottom, whatever may be the merits of either; above all we should cordially attach the natives to our rule, and in a few years we might hope that the natives of British India would be no longer, what they were pronounced some years ago to be, by one of the most sagacious of observers, "the most abject race in India;" and when we consider that a native officer is well paid when he gets a third, or even a fourth of what we are obliged to pay the European, we shall see that there would be great economy in this arrangement.

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that the elevation of the native, who has already attained to some rank, to higher rank is the only, or even the most important object of such an arrangement; one of equal, if not of superior importance is, that we should have the means of adequately paying the native, who whether trustworthy or not, we are compelled to employ in most important offices, offices in which he is constantly tempted to malversation by the inadequacy of his allowances.

Mr. Melville states that there are 2,813 natives employed, who receive salaries from £24 "upwards," but the salaries of by far the greater number of these stand at the lowest figure. Police Darogahs, entrusted with most important duties of police; Cash Keepers, having the custody of large sums of public money; Tahsildars, or native collectors, who realize the public revenue; Moonsiff, who ad-

judicate causes in the first instance up to a certain amount, receive from £30 to £100 a year, a sum totally insufficient for their respectable maintenance; and from some of these officers, Cash Keepers for example, we exact security to such an amount that the interest nearly equals their pay. Corruption, malversation, abuse of authority, are the natural consequences of such a system. This has been a theme of complaint with all Governments, but our financial necessities have never permitted us to redress it, and it never can be redressed until we resolve, by the extended use of native agency, to cheapen our civil administration. It is the European element in our administration that makes it extravagantly costly, when we compare our expenditure with that of a native Government, not only in the scale of allowances which we pay to European agents, but in the dead weight which it brings upon our finances under the head of pensions, furloughs, and absentee allowances. The native is always at his post, and works hard with cheerfulness, when an European is groaning under the same burden in a climate which is unfriendly to his constitution.

Can we wonder that under such a system of exclusion from high office, and paltry remuneration for services of the highest importance, the native character should have degenerated? Mr. Melville, speaking from hearsay, says that it has improved. There was need of improvement, indeed, seeing that in the opinion of Sir Thomas Munro the native subjects of the British Government had become the "most abject race in India," but no one fact is more patent or melancholy than this, that that class of natives who won the esteem and called forth the warm applause of the Duke of Wellington—men who had been trained as statesmen under native Governments, have altogether disappeared, and we have taken care that they should have no successors.

The admission that the native character has improved under a system which gives them a larger share in the government of their own country than they had before, is conclusive evidence that we ought to break down any principle that impedes their further advancement. But we are not to take credit to ourselves for this improvement, for it stands upon record against us, that we had at one time deliberately resolved to dispense with native agency as much as

possible in every department, and it was not till the whole machine of Government got so thoroughly clogged in our arrogant attempt to carry on the public business of a great empire with a handful of foreigners, that we relaxed from the rule. The same records will testify to the stubborn resistance that was made both in India and in England to the plan which was suggested by the late Sir Thomas Munro, in 1814, to admit natives largely into the judicial administration; and it was not our benevolence, but the complete success of that first attempt, that led to their subsequent elevation.

By so elevating them, we shall take an important step towards a favourable solution of the all-important question so emphatically put by the late Sir Thomas Munro. "There is one great question to which we should look in all our arrangements, what is to be their final result," (not upon the interests, the hopes, the prospects of our countrymen in India or in England) "but on the character of the people of India;—is it to be raised—is it to be lowered?"

But will the upper and middle classes of England, who now press so heavily upon the Directors with demands\* for patronage, as to make it next to impossible for them voluntarily to relinquish any of it—assist in furthering these great objects? The decision is entirely in their hands; on one side are those classes all-powerful, on the other, a hundred millions of people powerless and misrepresented. Already we have taken preliminary steps towards legislating for this mass of human beings, whose ancestors were in a state of high civilisation when ours were barbarians, without the slightest attempt being made by us to ascertain their opinions, or to consult their wishes—to legislate upon one-sided evidence of what is good for them and for us. We have already got as far as to hint a favourable opinion of a system of government, which Lord Hardinge tells us is a "puzzle." This favourable opinion, formed exclusively upon the evidence of those who cannot be otherwise than partial to it, is founded, as we have endeavoured to shew, upon misapprehension; and will not a further inquiry into that evidence strengthen that impression?

In conclusion, shall India be henceforth governed in the name of the Crown? Shall the Queen continue to be screened from a

\* A return of all applications made to Directors for appointments to India would give astounding results.



hundred millions of her subjects with whom her name would be a tower of strength?

By what authority has she been so concealed for the last twenty years? Up to the passing of the act of 1834, the Government of India was absolutely in the East India Company. The Sovereign's right to the Indian territory was in abeyance. By that Act it was directly asserted, and a great revolution was effected in the status of the Company. The Company was selected by the Crown as its Trustees, but no authority was given to the Trustees to administer the trust in their own name. They had authority to appoint officers to carry on the business of the trust; but they had no warrant for issuing commissions to those officers in their own names, as if they were still Principals, and not Trustees.

Great practical inconvenience has arisen at all times from authorities in India having derived their powers from different sources. In the early parts of our history, we had Admirals riding over the Governments of India, and thwarting their Councils, solely on the ground that they held a Royal Commission. We had then, and have frequently had since, instances of Royal Judges placing themselves in conflict with the Company's Government, solely on the same ground. A few years ago a Queen's officer in Bombay insisted upon placing his infantry regiment to the right of the artillery, contrary to all military usage, upon the ground that all Queen's regiments had the right of precedence over the Company's. Instances might be adduced of the greatest confusion having arisen, and the greatest injustice having been done, in endeavours to keep the two services upon an equal footing with respect to promotion; and at this moment there are heartburnings, and loud complaints at the undue preference given by the Admiral in command at Burmah, of officers of her Majesty's navy over officers of the Company's navy. This evil arises entirely from the name of the Crown not being used in the Government of India. The practice of giving a double commission to military officers—one in the name of the Crown, and the other in the name of the Company—was necessary so long as the Company was the nominal sovereign, in order to uphold that sovereignty; but as the Queen is now ostensibly the Sovereign of India, the distinction is no longer intelligible, and a multitude of inconveniences would be obviated by its disuse. Amongst the advantages that would accrue

from the open use of the Sovereign's name, would be that honours and rewards to the natives of India, coming directly from the Queen, would have a value, that they are now without ; and when we recollect that there is no people upon earth who value such distinctions more than the people of India, we shall see the importance of making her Majesty the fountain of honour to her Indian subjects, as she is to all others.

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### POSTSCRIPT.

AFTER the preceding pages had been sent to press, an article in the June number of the Quarterly Review, on "Kaye's War in Affghanistan" came under my notice. That article contains extracts from dispatches of the Court of Directors to the Government of India, dated in 1840 and 1841, hinting condemnation in pretty strong terms of our Affghan policy, and yet Sir John Hobhouse, who was then President of the India Board, was, by his own avowal, the author of that policy. We must suppose, then, that on these occasions, the dispatches which emanated from the Court spoke a different language from those which emanated from the Board, although they must have passed the ordeal of that Board.

The dispatches of the Court appear to have been founded upon a very able minute, that had been recorded upon the subject by the late Mr. Tucker, when he was chairman of the Court. If this was the case, Mr. Tucker must have been approving upon one sheet of paper, what he was strongly condemning on another ; at all events, we have here fresh proof of the impossibility of founding a sound opinion upon the working of the double system, without reference to records. A small budget of facts, would be of more value in guiding the judgment, than a host of opinions, come from whence they may. Such a reference would undoubtedly warrant us in agreeing with the reviewer on two points.

First, as to "the mischief which may flow from the secret and irresistible sway exercised by the Board of Control over the deliberations of the Court of Directors."

Secondly, that the system often operates "to stifle or to render of no effect much sound and sensible counsel, which the Directors are anxious and competent to impart."

The reviewer also remarks, "upon the mischievous consequences to India, of its affairs being in any way linked with the oscillations of party struggles in England." But as European questions may grow out of India politics; the "oscillation" is unavoidable. The only way to render it innocuous, is to place a permanent Council, of competent and independent men, in close contact with whoever may be the Minister for India.

If any further proof were wanting of the mischievous working of this, so called, double government, we should find it, in an instance which has just occurred. A dispatch was submitted to the Court of Directors by the Chairman on the affairs of Baroda, the result of a previous communication between himself and the President of the Board of Control. The Court objected to the opinions expressed in that dispatch, and amended it, so as to convey their own opinions, it was returned to them speaking the opinions of the Board of Control, and in this shape the Court was obliged to adopt, and to promulgate it to the Government abroad as conveying their own opinions of the case. This was not a question concerning war or peace, belonging to the jurisdiction of the Secret Committee, but an every day case, which came before the full Court of Directors. Have we not in this instance another proof of the fact, that under the present system a Minister of the Crown has the power of ruling India despotically in every department of its government whenever he pleases? "If," said Mr. Macaulay, when eulogizing the system in 1833, "the Court of Directors should be desirous, for example, of converting the present foot post of India into a horse post, they could not do so without the consent of my Right Honourable Friend the President of the Board of Control, but if my Right Honourable Friend was to desire me, his secretary, to send an order to the Court of Directors directing the change—the change must be made whether they like it or no, such is the state of the law." Is not then this system unconstitutional in principle, and highly inconvenient in practice? It is confidently said by its admirers, that the Court of Directors originates all measures, but with what truth, when we have an example before us, and many more may be behind, of a despatch being concocted between the Chairman and the President which spoke a totally different language from what the Court would have pronounced had the initiative been really with them. Upon what ground can such a system be defended or upheld?

# INDIA REFORM.

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No. VI.

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THE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
UNDER A BUREAUCRACY.

BY  
JOHN DICKINSON, JUN., M.B.A.S. F.R.G.S.

"HOMO SUM, HUMANI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO."—*Ter.*

LONDON:  
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1858.

*Price Threepence.*

## INDIA REFORM.

1.—THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SINCE 1834.

2.—THE FINANCES OF INDIA.

3.—NOTES ON INDIA.

BY DR. BUIST, OF BOMBAY.

4.—THE NATIVE STATES OF INDIA.

5.—AN EXTRACT FROM MILL'S HISTORY ON  
THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT;

AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE  
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE, BY J. SULLIVAN, ESQ.

*Preparing for Publication.*

7.—INDIAN WRONGS WITHOUT A REMEDY;

ILLUSTRATED BY

THE CARNATIC, SATTARAH, PARSEE, AND COORG CASES.

8.—PUBLIC WORKS.

9.—MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

10.—NATURE OF THE INDIA QUESTION,  
AND OF THE EVIDENCE UPON IT.

11.—CONDITION OF THE SUBJECTS OF THE  
NATIVE PRINCES BEFORE THE PERIOD  
OF BRITISH SUPREMACY.

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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FREQUENT intercourse with men possessing great experience in the administration of Indian affairs induced me to give my earnest attention to the investigation of the subject, and has eventually led me to lay the result of my inquiries before the public. My principal authorities have been :—

Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons, in 1848, on the Growth of Cotton in India.

Report of Expenditure on Public Works for 10 years, printed by order of the House of Commons, in 1851.

Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons on Indian Territories in June, 1852.

Report of the Bombay Cotton Committee, in 1847.

Letters on the Cotton and Commerce of Western India, reprinted from the "Times."

Files of the "Friend of India," for 1850-51-52.

Files of the "Bombay Times."

Reports, Books, and Pamphlets on Scinde.

Mill and Wilson's History of India.

Briggs' Land-Tax in India.

Kaye's Afghanistan.

Campbell's Modern India.

Chapman's Cotton and Commerce of India.

Royle's Culture of Cotton in India.

Shore's Indian Notes.

Grant's Bombay Cotton and Indian Railways.

Lecture on Cotton, delivered at the Society of Arts, before H.R.H. Prince Albert, by the President of the Chamber of Commerce at Manchester.

Letters on the Renewal of the East India Company's Charter, by  
Lieut.-General Briggs, published in the "Indian News."  
Remarks on the Affairs of India, by J. Sullivan, Esq.  
Debates in the Court of Proprietors in 1848-49.  
Sundry Pamphlets : and various authorities referred to in the text.

Besides the above, I have been indebted to Indian friends for an immense deal of information, advice, and active assistance, without which I could not have composed this work.

I am prepared to see a portion of the English press contrast my warmth of expression in the following pages, with the cooler tone of certain petitioners from a particular Presidency. However, any one, who attentively considers the grievances I have pointed out, will see that a body of merchants residing in the capital of a Presidency, were not the men who suffered most from them, and did not even feel some of them at all. Moreover, during nearly three years that I have been occupied with the subject, I have seen no prospect of support until quite lately, but on the contrary, a very clear prospect of great political parties uniting to oppose any reform in our Indian administration. Under such circumstances, although it might have shown more philosophy to describe the abuses of the present system and its national danger with indifference, it was perhaps natural for a man who loved his country, to feel and speak more warmly.

8, ST. ALBAN'S PLACE,  
January 31, 1853.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN complying with the request of my friends at home and in India that I should reprint this pamphlet in its present form, I must express my regret that incessant occupation has prevented me from attempting any material alteration in, or addition to, its contents; although it is satisfactory to observe that the allegations of the Native Petitions, received after this pamphlet was published, fully confirm its statements. As, however, in the absence of such authorities as these petitions, I had quoted the evidence of a young member of the Bengal Service, Mr. Campbell, with regard to the judicial and ryotwar systems, I must explain that the value of this author's work on "Modern India" appears to me to consist chiefly in the results of his personal observation and experience. For his "opinions" frequently remind me of some remarks made by Lord Teignmouth,\* and repeated in substance only the other day, by a distinguished member of the Bombay Native Association, to the following effect: "the fluctuations and limited period of residence of members of the British Administration in India contract their experience; while the large portion of time taken up by official forms, and the constant pressure of business, leave them little leisure for the study and reflection necessary to obtain a scientific knowledge of Indian subjects;—true information is procured with difficulty, because too often derived from mere practice, instead of being deduced from fixed principles; and the experience of others is only to be obtained by reference to an immense mass of records, which requires much time and labour;—finally, personal experience is the knowledge of obvious facts, with ignorance perhaps of more remote ones, and the connection between, and inferences

\* Mill's History, vol. v., p. 471.



from, the whole series of facts, so that experience may be not political wisdom, nor even a foundation for it."

These remarks should be borne in mind by those who are disposed to defer to Mr. Campbell's authority; as some of his opinions, though delivered in a tone of great confidence, appear to me to contain little political wisdom. For instance, in his "Scheme for the Government of India," page 101, he thus expresses himself:—

"It may be well here, once for all, to notice the question, whether it is possible to give the natives any share in the government of India, or to prepare them in any way for freedom. I might have commenced by stating what I have all along assumed and hold as beyond all question, that the idea of giving them any actual power is altogether chimerical and impossible. Our government must be the purest despotism."

I beg the reader to contrast with this rather strong opinion of Mr. Campbell's the following opinion from a much higher authority:—

"The best policy which Great Britain can pursue in order to retain her possessions in India, is to raise the moral and political character of the natives, to give them a share in every department of the state, to introduce amongst them the arts, sciences, and literature of Europe, and to secure to them, by a legislative act, a free constitution of government adapted to the situation of the country and the manners of the people. With this view I propose,—

"1st. That a general system of education founded upon this policy be established for the benefit of the natives in every part of the British territories in India.

"2nd. That the natives be declared eligible to all judicial, revenue, and civil offices whatever.

"3rd. That all laws by which the natives are to be governed be, before they are adopted as law, publicly discussed and sanctioned by local assemblies or councils, in which the interests of every class of natives shall be adequately represented by natives of their own class."

—*Evidence of the late Right Honourable Sir Alexander Johnston before the Indian Committee of the House of Commons in 1832.*

It suggests matter for deep reflection, to consider that although the above recommendation has been adopted with complete success in the island of Ceylon, the Company's Government refuse to adopt it in the neighbouring territories of India.

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# INDIA.

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## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

### REASONS FOR WRITING.—EFFECTS PRODUCED BY OFFICIAL SECRECY AND MISREPRESENTATION.

DID the public ever hear of an absentee landlord neglecting his estate, and consigning it to middle-men, which ensured rack-renting, poverty, crime, and disaffection, among his tenantry, and ended by ruining himself? Does the public know that its neglect of India has had the same distressing effects, and is likely to have the same fatal end?

I am sure few people are aware of the real nature of our Indian Administration: and it is high time that somebody should let the country know the truth about it; although I should never have ventured to attempt such a task, if my entreaties could have prevailed on men of ability and experience to tell the public as much as they told me. This is the reason, and the only one, for my writing; that I could not oblige other men to speak out with that uncompromising plainness of tone which this crisis of the Charter requires; and though the case will lose much from my manner of telling it, I hope the public will recollect that a man may be a stupid witness, whose evidence is nevertheless material to the trial of a cause; and I hope that to the readers of this pamphlet, the importance of its facts will compensate for its defects of style.

I have omitted many details, and some entire subjects; for a

mere abstract of the reforms needed in India, from a single Indian journal, for the last two years, would alone fill one or two volumes; and the journals do not contain everything; therefore I have been forced to limit my choice of materials, and confine myself to illustrating one single point, viz.: the necessity of making the Home Government of India trustworthy and responsible.

It is the fashion with those who criticise this Home Government, to add, in the very same breath with which they point out its abuses, a set of routine compliments to its motives. As I have not complied with this fashion,—as I have, on the contrary, expressed, without reserve, my unfavourable opinion of the Home Government,—I must explain to the reader that it is no want of charity which impelled me to do this. Charity is a discriminating virtue: not one which treats the good and the bad alike: the charity that allowed a robber and murderer to escape, would be a denial of charity to the honest portion of society who suffered from his crimes: and it is not charity that allows a body of public men to wear a mask which enables them to perpetuate the misgovernment of millions of our fellow-creatures; it is a pusillanimous want of charity for the masses who are suffering because we allow these men to wear a mask. Therefore, I have done what I could to strip off the drapery of “good intentions” that shrouds the rotten system of the Home Government, and to show how “private suits do putrefy the public good.” I have done this from pity for the natives of India, and from alarm for the safety of England.

And why is it that the public have known so little, and been deceived so much, about the Home Government? There are two reasons for it, which are, a system of secrecy, and a system of mystification. The first of these, the system of secrecy, is alone sufficient to account for what Lord William Bentinck characterised as “the shameful apathy and indifference of Great Britain to the concerns of India.” It did not occur to his Lordship that it was hardly fair to accuse the public of “shameful apathy and indifference,” when the truth could not reach them. Yet how stands the case? I am one of the public; I was indifferent while I knew little of the subject; but now let the

reader look at my seventh or eighth chapters, and say whether they betoken "shameful apathy and indifference?" And my case is that of every one of the public; they cannot, without the accident of private information, get at the truth; without knowing it, how can they be otherwise than indifferent? and while those who can, will not speak out, is it the indifference of the public which, is "shameful," or the system of secrecy which keeps the truth from them?

The state of British opinion on Indian affairs was admirably described by an article in the "Times" of Dec. 4, 1851, as being one of listless "security," *confounding the absence of anxiety with freedom from danger*, and this is entirely due to the suppression of information by the authorities. Now as the system of secrecy has been denied it is worth remarking that it has been affirmed by a late member of the Bombay Government, in the evidence of last session; by a late high functionary of the Madras Government, in an article of the "Calcutta Review," quoted in my chapter on Public Works; by a member of the Bengal Government in a Report quoted in the same chapter; by other official men, by the native petitioners of Madras and Bombay, and by "the Friend of India;" which praises the Company's Government whenever it can, and is often said to be a Government paper, for which reason I will give some extracts from it on this point.

May 21, 1851, the "Friend" answered the above-mentioned denial that information was withheld from the public; by printing a letter, refusing such information, even for a period anterior to the year 1820, signed by the very same functionary, who assured the House of Commons a few days afterwards, that the system of secrecy was quite a mistake;—and the "Friend" added, "the Government of India is a government of secrecy in a stronger sense than any other Government now in existence. The first principle at the India House is to conceal everything—everything past, present, or future—from the public, that it has the power of withholding."

July 17, 1851, the "Friend" says, "it is the perpetual aim of the Court of Directors to throw a veil of profound secrecy around

## SYSTEM OF SECRECY.

all their counsels and measures;" adding, that any disclosure by any of the functionaries of the State is "severely resented and condemned in no measured terms," and giving a description of the consequences for which my own experience has furnished an exact parallel: "the whole public service in India trembles at the idea of being detected in conveying any intelligence to the press, however interesting to the public, and however beneficial to the public service. We have scores of letters from officers of high official distinction, who have given us valuable and important facts; but always with the strictest injunction that their names might in no case be permitted to transpire."

Sept. 30, 1852, the "Friend" says, that "the great principle of mystery which pervades all the thoughts, feelings, and actions of public men in India, has its origin in Leadenhall Street." It adds, "Everything of which a public servant may become cognisant through his official position, however trivial or insignificant, is a *secret*;" and again: "The extraordinary anxiety which the Court manifests to keep every public transaction, and every official document as under a seal of confession, and its determination to visit with condign punishment any allusion which may be made to them, indicates no desire to promote the interests of the community, and is simply an exhibition of that morbid fondness for secrecy which belongs to all corporations."

And this is the real state of the case; "those whose deeds are evil shun the light;" the Government of India is a government of secrecy in a stronger sense than any other Government now in existence; the footprint on the sand was not more alarming to Robinson Crusoe than a trace of inquiry into the mysteries of their administration is to the Authorities of India; and of course while a despotic Government maintains this "system of secrecy," its servants who can, will not speak out, and as an inevitable consequence, the public, who cannot get at the truth, become "apathetic and indifferent to the concerns of India."

And this is not all: besides the system of secrecy, there is a system of mystification, of eternally deceiving the public, by flattering pictures of the condition of the natives, which is of as old a date as that irresponsible government which I denounce

as the bane of India. The historian Mill continually adverts to this practice. He remarks, that it is always the interest of the Minister of the day, "to prevent inspection; to lull suspicion asleep; to ward off inquiry; to inspire a blind confidence; to praise incessantly the management of affairs in India; and by the irresistible force of his influence, make other men praise it;" and he adds, that "by the interest of the minister, "complaint is extinguished, and the voice of praise raised in its stead"—and all parties in turn get committed to this system by the changes of ministry. On one occasion, after noticing a rebuke administered to the Indian Authorities by the House of Commons for this system of deception, the historian says they only followed the beaten common track of misrepresentation which the instruments of Government are seldom without a motive to tread; and farther on, "nothing is more remarkable than the propensity of all sorts of persons connected with the Indian Government, to infer from anything and everything, the *flourishing state of the country*." On another occasion, he notices "the unintermitting concert of praises, sung from year to year, upon the Indian Government, and upon the increasing happiness of the Indian people, while they were all the while sinking into deeper poverty and wretchedness." Elsewhere he points out the ease with which the results of Indian administration can be misrepresented in this country, and warns the public that they are by no means sufficiently on their guard against the deception.

Now I have endeavoured to show in my eighth chapter, what were the effects of this deception, in the passing of the last three Charters; and in my sixth and seventh chapters, to show the way in which it is going on now; and when I consider that it is employed to resist the strongest conceivable claims on our justice; to say nothing of our humanity; and to perpetuate the "nightmare oppression lying heavy on many million hearts" in India; this system of mystification appears to me perfectly shocking!—it seems to call for a judgment on the nation that employs it. It is written:

"The Lord shall root out all deceitful lips: and the tongue that speaketh proud things;



"Which have said, With our tongue will we prevail: we are they that ought to speak, who is lord over us?"

"Now for the comfortless trouble's sake of the needy; and because of the deep sighing of the poor;

"I will up, saith the Lord, and will help every one from him that swelleth against him . . ."

Aye, reader! there are many signs and warnings in India at this moment, and if the present system is allowed to go on, it will soon expose our empire to a greater peril than it has ever yet encountered.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE THEORY IN CANNON ROW.

ON the 2nd of April, in the year 1852, the Prime Minister told the House of Lords, that "in the Board of Control, practically speaking, the whole administration of the affairs of India rests." This was the truth; and a truth whose incalculably important consequences are not appreciated by the people of this country. However, those who have an interest in keeping things as they are, and preventing any change in the actual system of Government, were exceedingly disconcerted by Lord Derby's plain speaking, and have been labouring ever since to persuade the public not to believe the truths disclosed by him. For this purpose the old fable of a double Government and a balance of power, has been repeated to the world by every channel of publicity which official influence could command; and it has been asserted with the utmost confidence, that the control of the finances and the management of administrative details is in the hands of the Court of Directors. Let us see then whether there is anything to corroborate Lord Derby's statement?

The Chairman of the Court of Directors stated in his place in Parliament, on the 19th of April, 1852, that all letters and despatches come to the Directors, and that when they have come to a resolution on the business in hand, they send their despatch to the Board of Control, "who either approve or disapprove of it;" but that the Directors have a right to call upon the Board to give their reasons for their alterations of it, if the Board think it their duty to insist upon them. We learn from this, that the Board of Control can "disapprove and alter" the government of the Court of Directors: but it appears to me, that if the Board has the

power to alter the spirit and letter of the Directors' despatches, and uses such a power, the Directors are no more independent of the President of the Board of Control, than the Clerks of the Foreign, Colonial, and War Offices, are independent of the Secretaries for those departments; and that the Directors must perform much the same functions as the head clerks of Government offices. Moreover, the statement of the Chairman, that all letters and despatches come to the Directors, is inconsistent with the following evidence from still better authority. In the Committee on Official Salaries, which sat last year, the President of the Board of Control was asked—"Do you correspond with the Governor-general of India, and other high functionaries, the Governors of Madras and Bombay, directly, without the intervention of the Chairman of the India House?" Answer—"Of course I do, privately." Here then I submit are strong grounds for presuming that Lord Derby told the simple truth when he informed the House of Lords, that "in the Board of Control, practically speaking, the whole administration of the affairs of India rests."

But, besides this presumptive evidence, the letter of the law clearly gives the Board the power of conducting the whole administration, by investing it with "full power and authority to superintend, direct, and control all acts, operations, and concerns of the said Company, which in any wise relate to or concern the Government, or revenues, of the said territories . . . ;" again, by prohibiting the Directors "from issuing any orders, instructions, despatches, official letters, or communications whatever, relating to India, or to the Government thereof, until the same shall have been sanctioned by the Board . . . ;" and further, by compelling the Directors either to prepare instructions and orders, upon any subject whatever, at fourteen days' notice from the Board, or else to transmit the orders of the Board on the subject to India; which gives the power of initiative to the Board whenever it likes to use it. Moreover, it was distinctly admitted by the creators of the Board, that they had transferred to it the whole power of administration. Mr. Pitt said, "There was no one step that could have been taken previous to the passing of the

Act of 1784, by the Court of Directors; that the Board of Control had not now a right to take by virtue of the power and authority vested in it by that Act." Mr. Dundas said: "Without the whole powers of Government the Board of Control would be a nugatory institution." Lord Grenville, one of its first members, said: "The whole authority of the Government was actually committed to the Board; and the carrying on the Government in the name of the Company was only what the Company had done themselves, in the case of Indian princes whose rule they had superseded." Finally, a former President of the Board of Control said, in 1883, "In that Board for the last fifty years has the real effective Government of India resided." I think this is sufficient evidence that Lord Derby's statement in the House of Lords was not a misrepresentation, and that the real state of the case was correctly defined by the historian Mill, who says:—"The real, sole governing power in India is the Board of Control; and it only makes use of the Court of Directors as an instrument, as a subordinate office for the management of details, and the preparation of business for the cognizance of the superior power."

If this definition be correct, it is evident that the power of the Directors must depend entirely upon the degree to which the Board allows them to manage the business of detail, and such a power manifestly corresponds to that of the head clerks in Government offices. In fact, the only distinction I can perceive between the functions of Directors and those of Government clerks, is in the privilege of the former to protest in writing against the measures of the Board; but if it be true, as I have heard and believe, that the Directors' protests are treated with very little ceremony, and habitually disregarded by the Board; and because these protests cannot exercise the slightest influence on the Parliament or the public, from whom they are concealed, I do not see that such a distinction makes any real difference between the power of the Directors and that of the head clerks of the Treasury, or Colonial Office. But the reader may say, supposing that the Directors are no more than clerks of the Board of Control, what is the harm of it? The harm is this: it may happen, as it does at this moment, that a President and two

Secretaries who are new to the affairs of India, and have none of them ever set foot in the country, are invested with the secret irresponsible despotism over an empire as large as the whole of Europe, comprised of different nations who are frequently high-spirited and warlike races, and containing within it such an abundance of inflammable materials as to have induced the writers and statesmen who have had most experience, and are the highest authorities on the subject, to declare unanimously, that without a knowledge of the institutions, habits, feelings, and prejudices of the natives of India, their European masters are always liable to make mistakes which may produce a conflagration, and place the empire in peril. For instance, let it be supposed that an ignorant President of the Board of Control decides on some measure which is a climax of iniquity and impolicy; a Director, saturated with information on the subject, writes a protest against it, clearly exposing by the light of his experience the characteristic bearings of the question, and exhibiting the series of evils which must ensue from the adoption of the Board's measure; of course, if the President were responsible to Parliament, he would be forced to think twice before he acted in defiance of such a protest as this; but as it is, considering the Director as no better than a clerk, he tosses the protest into a wilderness of records, and pursues his plan without modification;—let it be supposed that an Afghan war is the consequence, the conclusions of the Director are verified to the letter, until, after the sacrifice of a British army and a frightful waste of human life and treasure, it turns out that the Board's measure has been as impolitic as it was iniquitous, and has converted a host of neighbouring nations who were previously disposed to be friends into implacable enemies, while it has robbed one or more generations of our native fellow-subjects of the local expenditure and attention to their social progress which was due to them from British justice, and has saddled themselves and their posterity with a crushing burthen of debt.

When all this is the natural consequence of investing an ignorant Minister with the secret irresponsible despotism over a vast empire, can the reader ask what is the harm of a system which exposes us every day to a recurrence of dangers, similar in

kind to the above, while they may be next time infinitely greater in degree? Surely, if Lord Derby's statement was correct that "in the Board of Control, practically speaking, the whole administration of the affairs of India rests," and if the Board must exercise "*the whole powers of government*," it will be prudent to provide for the responsibility of this depository of supreme power, especially when it is remembered that this important post of the Presidency of the Board of Control is always looked upon as a subordinate place in the Ministry, because its salary is rather less than that of the other members of the Cabinet. But besides the proofs already furnished of the truth of Lord Derby's description, it has been entirely confirmed since by the evidence of Lord Ellenborough. His Lordship said that, "the President of the Board of Control can now overrule the Directors;" that, "they can do no more than express an opinion;" and that "they have in fact, no authority." He said that, with a Court of Directors at one end of the system, and a President of the Board of Control, with a large body of intelligent clerks, at the other, he could not say how the government was conducted; but added, "I know that when I was at the Board of Control, I conducted the government; there is no doubt about that." So then the power is in the hands of the President of the Board of Control; and if he does not know how to use it, he may ask his ignorant secretaries and intelligent clerks; and we shall see presently what these gentlemen make of the irresponsible despotism of India.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PRACTICE IN LEADENHALL STREET.

THE body in which supreme power originally resided, and which still gives its name to the Government, is the East India Company; that is, the Court of Proprietors. As the description of this body given by Lord Derby in his speech of April 2nd, was very clear and correct, I will again quote his words. "With that Act of 1833, the Court of Proprietors ceased to have any control or interest whatever in the affairs of India. The whole business of the Court of Proprietors at this moment consists in receiving the dividends upon their stock, and in electing the members of the Court of Directors. Further than that they have no function whatever to perform. It is true they may meet and discuss together, but with regard to the legislation of India, any decision or vote of the whole Court of Proprietors need not exercise the slightest influence over the conduct of the government." As this statement was literally true, and the Court of Proprietors has long been notoriously and entirely subservient to the Court of Directors, I will at once pass on to the description of this Corporation. The Court of Directors consists of twenty-four members, whose qualification is the possession of 1000*l.* stock; but as one-fourth of this body go out of office every four years, and must remain out for twelve months, the permanent number of Directors is really thirty, of whom twenty-four form the Court, while six remain a year out of office until it is their turn to be re-elected. This re-election is a matter of course, because since the Directors prefer to hold their places for life, and always support their former colleagues on a re-election, the entirely subservient constituency go on electing

them for life, and in many instances long after they are unfit to attend to the affairs of India. This Court has, with a few reservations the nominal and generally the substantial power of making the Home appointments in the Indian Civil Service. The composition of this Corporation is at present exceedingly defective, for although there are some warm and enlightened friends of India among the Directors, such men are always of necessity a very small minority in the Court. The reasons for this are, firstly, that the disgusting incidents of a canvass for the Direction, which costs about 4000*l.*, and often extends over a period of seven years, deter almost all the distinguished servants of Government, who return from India, from being candidates for the office, although frequently in the prime of their faculties, and capable of doing many years' hard work in this country; secondly, the value of the patronage draws many men into the Direction, who are from various causes unfit for its duties, such as bankers, merchants, and directors of companies, whose business in the Indian government is simply the distribution of patronage for the interest of their private banks and companies; and thirdly, the system of re-election retains in office worn-out, old men, who are incapable of managing, and some even of understanding the business they are supposed to transact. This Court forms annually three Committees, besides the secret Committee, consisting of the Chairman, Deputy-Chairman, and senior member of the Court. The Chairs hold the same rank *ex officio* in the three Committees, which are, 1, political and military; 2, finance and home; 3, revenue, judicial, and legislative. It may be as well to explain here what the business is which is transacted by the Court.

It must be remembered that England governs an Empire in India, as large as the whole of Europe, inhabited by as many different races, and containing provinces as extensive as European kingdoms, and as densely peopled; for instance, the population of the Bengal Presidency is larger than that of France, the population of the Agra Presidency larger than that of Great Britain, and so on; and as the business of this Empire is referred down to minute details to the Home Government, so that nothing



should escape its supervision, it is difficult to give the reader an idea of the vast mass of correspondence which comes home to England from India. When the reader considers, that many despatches are accompanied by such a mass of documents as "cannot be even examined without considerable labour and time—that they amount to 2, 3, 4, 5, and occasionally 20,000 pages," he may conceive the tons of papers which the Home Government is supposed to go through. In Lord Broughton's evidence before the Official Salaries' Committee, he stated that with one single despatch 45,000 pages of "collections" were sent. The first great evil of this system is, that the administration of India is clogged and impeded in a most mischievous degree,—in a degree which reduces to despair the most zealous and able of the Company's servants, and after all a good deal of business is unavoidably slurred over, and either pretended to be done, or not done at all.

I saw the same thing happen in France during the reign of the late King Louis Philippe. The abuse of centralisation had drawn the mass of administrative details to Paris, and of course the business of the country was ruinously delayed, and either badly done, or left undone. While the Prefects would not take responsibility on themselves, because they were likely to be reprimanded, and have their measures reversed by a central Government (or rather by its irresponsible clerks!) which could not possibly understand the grounds of their decisions half so well as themselves, the supreme Government by its bureaucratic, "paperasse" spirit, and passion for governing in details, left the country in fact either without an administration or with a wretchedly bad one. This was one main cause of the revolution of 1848 in France, and St. Simon points out in his memoirs that a similar weakness of Louis XIV. for governing in details, was a main cause of the ruin of France under his reign. One of the wisest acts of the present Ruler of France has been to restore specifically the mass of the local administration to the Prefects, investing them with real power and proportionate responsibility, and depriving the Paris bureaucracy of its authority.

A similar reform is now most urgently required in our Indian

administration, for the second great evil of referring such a mass of details to the Home Government is that it throws the real power into the hands of an irresponsible Bureaucracy. This is the class which Burke denounced as "the creatures of the desk, and the creatures of favour," and which he described in the following passage :—"The tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interest of States, passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it, for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. The calculators compute them out of their senses. The jesters and buffoons shame them out of everything grand and elevated. Littleness in object and in means, to them appears soundness and sobriety." Now, on examining into the details of the measures pursued in India, we shall find that they bear the stamp of the "vulgar politicians" described by Burke, and the reader will not wonder at the extraordinary mal-administration described in the following chapters, if he bears it in mind that "the creatures of the desk and the creatures of favour," are really governing India, and the Home Government is at bottom a Bureaucracy.

But such is the fact: from the sheer physical impossibility of an Indian Minister or Director examining the shiploads of business referred from India, even if they were disposed to do so, it is necessary to maintain a large establishment of clerks to do the work for them, with departments at the India House and Board of Control, corresponding to the departments of the Government abroad, and entailing an expense of 160,000*l.* a-year on the people of India, while the result of the system is to throw the real work of preparing the despatches into the hands of the clerks at the India House, and that of altering them into the hands of the clerks at the Board of Control.

The reader will see this from the mode of transacting the business. When a despatch arrives from India, it is referred in the first instance to the Examiner's department to which it

belongs, after which the Chairs confer with the official in charge of that department, and settle with him the tenor of a reply, and transmit a draft of this reply to the Indian Minister, in what is technically called "P.C.;" that is to say, "previous communication." Now it is evident that, partly from the annual rotation in the functions of the Directors, and every fourth year in the men themselves, and principally from the mass of the business, the Chairs must, in this preliminary stage of "P.C.," depend mainly on the clerks who are permanently in office, for information, advice, and assistance. Nay, such is this dependence, that even in a discussion in the Court of Proprietors, after previous notice, it is pitiable to see the Chairman referring to a secretary who sits by his side, and keeps on whispering, and prompting, and stopping him, as if he were a mere puppet; and probably the Minister at the other end of the system is in the same predicament. However, in this stage of "P.C." if there is a difference of opinion on the draft, it is discussed, and almost invariably settled in friendly communication between the Minister and the Chair; finally, the draft is returned by the Minister, either adopted or altered; and then it is submitted to the Committee of Directors superintending the department to which it belongs, with all the papers bearing on the case, to be considered, and discussed, and adopted or altered; and afterwards it is exposed to the same process in the aggregate Court, and then goes, for the first time as an official communication, to the Minister.

Now, Messrs. Melville and Shepherd are delighted with the success of this system of "previous communication," in bringing about an agreement between the Minister and the Chairs,—in facilitating business, and saving time.\* No doubt it does all this, but how does it do it? by stripping the Directors' Committees of all their importance and usefulness! for when once the draft is settled, what chance have the dissentient members of any Committee of resisting the Minister, the Chairs, their majority in the aggregate Court, and the Bureaucracy?—All they can do is to complain to their friends in private, and to record a protest, which is of no earthly use, except to show that it is in vain for

\* Report "Indian Territories," June 29th, 1862, pp. 5-67.

them to prove to demonstration that the Government is going wrong, when once the irresponsible bureaucracy has decided its course.

I ask if this is not an intolerable abuse? Is it not evident that this "previous communication" system is reversing the first intention, and the whole scope and purpose of the Directors' official existence? Is it not plain that if the opinion of the Directors is to be of any use to the Minister at all, it should go to him, not *after* his mind is made up by the opinion of "intelligent clerks," not *after* he has decided on the matter in hand, but *before*? Does it not stand to reason that if it be worth while for Indian business to go through a Committee and an aggregate Court of Directors, who are presumed to sift it thoroughly, and express a deliberate opinion upon it, all this should be done before the first communication goes to the Minister, and not after "intelligent clerks" on both sides have superficially examined and decided the question? It is not that the Council Board should govern: the Indian Minister must of course govern; *as he does now*; and as every Minister ought to do in his department; but he should receive his advisers' deliberate counsel before he makes up his mind, and not after; he should be bound, *as he is now*, to state his reasons in writing, if he disapproved of the policy recommended by them, to make his personal responsibility apparent in case of his ultimately adhering to his own views. Coadjutors of this sort would be some check upon the Indian Minister, particularly if they were the efficient and experienced body that they ought to be; at least they would be an invaluable Council to him, for the only real check that can be imposed upon him is parliamentary responsibility, for which I have proposed a very simple plan in my eighth chapter. As it is now, the Court of Directors are a mere cloak for the "irresponsible despotism" of the Minister; and they are a source of injury to India and danger to England, by the grasping spirit of the majority of their members for patronage.

Before I touch on this point I must remark, that there is on the face of it something wrong in a system by which, as it is said, "the Directors are paid in patronage"—that "their salaries are

only 800*l.* a-year, because they are paid in patronage." We ought to cut down a mischievous bureaucracy, and save enough by the reduction to give the Directors competent salaries, like all other public servants, and so get rid of the very improper phrase now employed, that "the Directors are paid in patronage!" Why, in this matter-of-fact country, such language naturally puts it into the heads of Directors that their patronage may be used in a way that will pay them—pay well too!—and it is notorious that the managers of banks and companies who take so much trouble to get into the Direction, are "wise in their generation." Under the present system there are two fatal consequences of the Directors being "paid in patronage:"—1st, it enslaves the Directors to the Indian Minister, by their fear that if they oppose him he may use his parliamentary omnipotence to strip them of their patronage; 2ndly, it gives the majority of the court an insatiable spirit of grasping; of grasping territory, and grasping all the valuable Indian appointments for their European nominees, in spite of the emphatic condemnation of this system by our greatest Indian statesmen, which passion of the Directors is doing incalculable mischief in India, and makes our Government hated by the educated classes of the natives.

And after all, when we consider the whole system of a Board of Control and a Court of Directors,—when we remember that our only ostensible reason for keeping up this cumbrous and costly pretence of a double government is to provide a Council for the minister and a vent for the patronage, surely we may attain both these objects in a simpler and better way, by allowing all England to compete for patronage which all England is entitled to share, and by providing a real working Council for the Minister.

I will conclude this part of my subject by a notice of the present value and mode of distributing the patronage. When the number of appointments for the year is ascertained, the whole are divided into twenty-eight equal parts, of which two are allotted to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, two to the President of the Board of Control, and one to each of the Directors. Taking the average of seventeen years since the Charter of 1833, there have been sent out about 28 writers, and as many assistant surgeons

and chaplains or other officers, independent of from 250 to 300 cadets annually, affording to each Director a patronage which, if sold at the rate of a cadetship actually proved to be purchased in 1849 at 1050*l.*, and a writership at 3000*l.*, the annual value of a single share of patronage would not fall short of 14,000*l.* or 15,000*l.*, and that of the Chairs and the Indian Minister from 28,000*l.* to 30,000*l.* per annum. Besides his patronage as above, the President of the Board of Control directs the expenditure to any extent of "secret service" money, which as such is not accounted for on the books, and has on some occasions exceeded 100,000*l.* in one year. How differently do we deal with the poor ryot's money and our own! The Secretary for Foreign Affairs is only permitted to disburse as much as 10,000*l.* in one year, and is obliged at the end of it to swear that whatever has been expended was absolutely necessary for the public service.

Here then is the great bribe of patronage! appointments of the value of nearly 400,000*l.* per annum, distributed every year, and year after year, among the upper classes of this country, and in which hardly any respectable English family is not directly or indirectly interested! This is indeed heavy odds thrown into the scale against justice to India; for it would be shutting my eyes to the light of day to pretend not to see the proofs all round me of the influence of this patronage in recruiting adherents to the present system of Government, and suppressing evidence against its abuses.

However, though I will not attempt to deny that to reform the abuses of the present Government, especially of the Court of Directors, would gradually and greatly reduce this patronage; for, as a rule, all the men of ripe Indian experience, who have lived in the interior, and known the natives well, and seen the foundations on which our empire rests, all these are as strongly opposed to the grasping system as I am, and as much convinced of its iniquity and impolicy, and to give them a preponderance in the Indian Ministers' Council, would at once begin to cut down the patronage; still, I shall endeavour to show that the abuses which best serve our private interests are directly contrary to the national interest:—that private gains do putrefy the public

good"—and that the present system is not only ruining and degrading the natives of India, but is bringing our empire into a more critical situation every day.

And besides the dangers I shall point out hereafter, there are one or two which I will briefly notice here. The "free press" is beginning to do its work in India—the Parsee merchants, the Zemindars, the native heads of castes, are beginning to feel their power, to combine, and to ask for redress of grievances; some of them are violent, and these do not alarm me; but some are remarkably temperate, and I confess that, knowing the strength of their case, of which I will endeavour to give the reader an idea in the following chapters, I fear the men who begin so temperately, and have reason entirely on their side. So the Americans began, and we all know how it ended. Let not these moderate claims be neglected, when, as I will show, there is matter enough to swell them into an avalancho. Let not the incipient opposition of the natives be despised because it is feeble now. No doubt we can now accept or reject the opportunity of doing justice to India; but it may be doubted whether, if we reject it, we shall ever have the opportunity again. When Julian marched against Persia, he remarked of the Goths, "*Hostes quærere se meliores;*" in less than fifteen years, says Gibbon, these Goths had overthrown the Roman Empire.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RYOTWAR SYSTEM.

THE reader must not suppose, as we too practical Englishmen are apt to do, that the theory on which men act is of little consequence provided they mean to do their duty. While our neighbours the French, have shown too little attention to facts in forming theories, we frequently run into the other extreme, and pay too little attention to theory; which is sometimes as fatal an error. We shall see the importance of acting on a correct theory if we reflect that, crime is the act itself, and not the intention; and to make the crime consist in the intention is that pestilent heresy of the Jesuits denounced in the "Lettres Provinciales;" and of which I can say from personal observation, that the same doctrines of making the crime consist in the intention are still demoralising large portions of continental society; utterly confounding their notions of right and wrong; and leaving them no fixed moral principles. To show the importance of an error in theory, it has been admitted by one of the historians who sympathised most deeply with the afflictions of his fellow-creatures, that the crusaders who followed Simon de Montfort, were probably not worse than other men; only they had a mistaken idea of their duties; and the massacre of the Albigenes was the consequence. I have said this much about the duty of forming correct theories; because while the conclusions of this and my sixth chapter will be that we have for many years allowed a bureaucratic Government to act on vicious principles of taxation in India, principles which our common sense at once repudiates when we think of applying them to ourselves, and which have caused extreme pain and injury to our native fellow-subjects, it really seems to me a very



weak set-off against all the people of India have suffered, so as that our intentions were good.

I have now to show the consequences to Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, of the Government's adopting a wrong theory with regard to its proprietary right to the land in India, and to examine whether there is any justification for the assertion of this theory to the present day.

As the true theory has long since been proved and acted upon successfully in the North-west Provinces, and has been entirely confirmed since by our experience of the Punjab, and our observation of the practice in native states, I shall refer the reader to a work on "Modern India," by Mr. Campbell, giving a very clear and graphic description of his experience of the working of this theory in the above province.

I will now state the wrong theory of the land-tax, quoting one or two modern authorities for it, and point out the mischief it has done in Madras and Bombay, reserving a notice of Bengal for another chapter. The first great authority who asserted that the rent of land in India belonged to the Government, was, I am sorry to say, that amiable man Lord Cornwallis. Forty years afterwards Mr. Mill repeated this doctrine to the Commons' Committee of 1831, adding that "a country, wherein the whole rent is paid to the state, is in a most happy condition, seeing that such rent would suffice for all the wants of the Government, and the people would then be untaxed." When pressed as to the means of collecting the Indian land revenue, so that no more than the "rent" should be taken, he admitted that this would be a

difficulty for any European collector; with an imperfect knowledge of the natives, their language, and circumstances; with a swarm of ill-paid and corrupt servants; with perhaps 10,000 square miles of country to look after, and 150,000 tenants to settle with individually; but he had no doubt means would be found of limiting the demand to the rent, "and then the prosperity of the country will be as fully secured as it can be," (poor country!)—He continued: "if the land-tax were limited to the rent only, then the revenue system of India is the best in the world"—Finally, "as soon as that point is attained when the rent of land

will be adequate to all the exigencies of the Government, then all the other taxes may be abolished, and India will be a country *wholly untaxed*." Mr. Mangles, a Director, and also a Director of that New Zealand Company of which we have heard a good deal lately, reiterated the above doctrine to the Commons' Committee of 1848, assuring them that the claim of the Government in India to that which constitutes "rent" in other parts of the world, was perfectly legitimate, and therefore this was the very best system of taxation in the world, because, so far the rent sufficed, the people were *wholly untaxed*. So another witness told this Committee that the land revenue system was "an excellent system and of great advantage to the country, inasmuch as what goes into the pockets of individuals in this country, goes there into the coffers of the State, and the country is *pro tanto exempt from taxation*."

Now, as I will show that the Government never had any more right to touch the "rent" in India, than they have in England, I should like to know how gentlemen in the House of Commons would like it themselves, if a Government, backed by an overwhelming army, undertook to *wholly untax* the people of this country, by simply taking the rent of land?

It might be urged, as in the case of the massacre of the Abigenses, that men were no worse perhaps than their contemporaries, if their error was one of mere theory; but when I can show that the fatal consequences of applying the ryotwar theory were distinctly proved *before* it was definitely adopted by the Indian Government; that after the long practice of this theory in one Presidency had shown its dreadful effects in confiscating the capital of the people, it was deliberately applied to another Presidency; that to this day its evils are not redressed, although the true theory has long been established by historians, and adopted with success in some of our own provinces, then I do say that the Bureaucracy have been guilty of a degree of oppression towards the natives of India which would make it a national sin for us to prorogue their irresponsible despotism for another twenty years.

However, the theory having once been adopted that the rent is

land belonged to the Government, the great bait of the ryotwar system, or annual settlement with individual cultivators, was what was called its "discovery of concealed cultivation;" and consequent increase of revenue, for of course it began with raising the revenue by confiscating the property of the landlords, though as such a system was "cutting open the hen that laid the golden eggs," by destroying the capitalists of the country, the ryotwar system always ended, as a rule, by swamping the whole population in one dead level of pauperism. There was another mistake made by the originators of the ryotwar settlements, which was to assume that all who were designated "ryots" belonged to the same class; the fact is, that the word in its primitive sense only means subject, and it is applicable alike to a landlord or a tenant—as well to the proprietor of five thousand acres, as to the tenant-at-will of one. In the districts of Madras, where this system was first applied, the Government officers adopted the rates of assessment of preceding native Governments, which were from forty-five to fifty per cent of the gross produce; but these rates had been paid under the native or village system, and it did not occur to the English collectors that the people *could not possibly have paid such rates*, at least not without being ruined as we ruined them, unless there had been something more than met the eye in the system, which made the real very different from the seeming burthen, and made the *nominal* taxation often more than double its actual amount!

The truth was that under the native system the land was held by a very peculiar tenure, not then understood by the English, which has certainly prevailed all over India, and is at this day in full operation in the native States, as well as in *our* north-west provinces and *our* Punjab, and in short wherever we have not ignorantly destroyed it. It was this: the whole landed property of the village was divided into a certain number of shares, which might be again subdivided in families, but were always kept distinct for municipal purposes, and the owners of these shares were the only real landed proprietors in the village, the only ones responsible for the Government tax, the rest of the inhabitants being lease-holders, tenants-at-will, &c., under them. And these

shareholders had been able to bear the high assessments of the Moguls by bringing more and more of the waste lands under tillage; and actually cultivating so much more land than that which paid the tax, that it frequently left the nominal assessment of fifty per cent less than one-half that amount on the whole of the cultivated land.

Now, although the introducers of ryotwar settlements were ignorant of the above facts, they ought to have known, that the native Governments which immediately preceded us, that such men as Hyder Ali, had taken all the revenue the people could pay; short of paying their capital; therefore, when they found that, after measuring and classing every field, and assessing the individual cultivators of it at forty-five or fifty per cent of the gross produce, it produced a great increase of revenue, they ought to have felt that there must be some mistake in their principles. Instead of this, the great triumph of ryotwar collectors for many years was, to find out what they called "concealed cultivation."

Nevertheless, when this system was established, its operation in ruining the cultivators was so rapid, that years before it was definitely adopted by the Home Government, its most famous advocates had discovered its evils, not from theory, but from practice. Colonel Read, its originator, had declared that "it involved the necessity of ousting all between the Government and the cultivator." Colonel Monro had declared that, unless the assessment were reduced from twenty-five to thirty-three per cent, the land would go out of cultivation. Finally, the Madras Board of Revenue had recorded the following strong opinion against ryotwar settlements:—"Ignorant of the true resources of the newly acquired countries, as of the precise nature of their landed tenures, we find a small band of foreign conquerors no sooner obtaining possession of a vast extent of territory, peopled by various nations differing from each other in language, customs, and habits, than they attempt what would be termed an Herculean task, or rather a visionary project, even in the most civilised countries of Europe, of which every statistical information is possessed, and of which the Government and people are one, viz.,

*to fix a land-rent*—not on each province, district, or country, nor on each estate or farm, but on *every separate field* in their dominions. In pursuit of this supposed improvement, we find them unintentionally dissolving the ancient tie which united the republic of each Hindoo village, and, by a kind of agrarian law, newly assessing and parcelling out the lands which from time immemorial had belonged to the village community collectively, not only among the individual members of the privileged order, but even among the inferior tenantry; we observe them ignorantly denying, and, by their denial abolishing *private property in the land*; professing to limit their demand on each field, and, in fact, by establishing for such limit an unattainable maximum, *assessing the ryot at discretion*; and, like the Mussulman Government which preceded them [Hyder Ali,] binding the cultivator by force to the plough; compelling him to till land acknowledged to be over assessed; dragging him back if he absconded; deferring their demand upon him until his crop came to maturity; then taking from him all that could be obtained, and leaving to him nothing but his bullocks and seed-grain; nay, perhaps, obliged to supply him even with these, in order to enable him to resume his melancholy task of toiling for others.”

Such was a literally true description of the practice of this ryotwar theory; and it was *after* having officially received all the above representations, that, in 1812, the Home Government definitely adopted this system of assessing “every separate field” in the Madras Presidency “at an unattainable maximum,” and settling annually with the individual cultivators. The ruinous effect of such a system may be conceived, and one of them was, that the revenue began at length to decrease till it fell to *considerably below what it was* when Colonel Monro proposed his reductions; and this, I believe, more than anything else at length convinced the Home Government of the absolute necessity of making some change in such a system—and, accordingly, Sir Thomas Monro was allowed to carry out, as Governor of Madras, in 1827, the reductions of from twenty-five to thirty-three per cent. in the assessment which he had recommended so many years before. I say the reader may

conceive what the people of Madras must have suffered during this interval! and he will perhaps remember "the unintermitting concert of praises sung from year to year upon the Indian Government, and the increasing happiness of the Indian people, all the while they were sinking into deeper poverty and wretchedness."

As the same mystification goes on at this day, I should think with greater intensity than ever, and it will go on as long as the existing system of Home Government is tolerated, I will now quote some extracts from Mr. Campbell's book, to show the present operation of the ryotwar system in Madras:—"I must therefore describe a ryotwar settlement, or rather absence of settlement, as it exists at Madras. For the distinguishing feature of the ryotwar system is simply that no settlement is concluded at all, but the revenue is made the most of from year to year, without settlement . . ." "The assessment is rather fieldwar than ryotwar. The Government deals directly, not only with each ryot, but with each field. Instead of assessing each village, it assesses each plot of ground. A field is not, in India, a large piece of land fenced and hedged, but a minute portion, suited to the minute tenantry, divided from the rest by a little gathering together of the earth about six inches high. Fencing is not common, and in a dry flat plain containing thousands of such fields side by side, it may be supposed that boundaries are only permanent when the fields belong to different owners on the spot, with different interests. Moreover instead of assessing at a fixed sum for a series of years, there is fixed on each *field* a maximum rent to be paid for good seasons and good crops: and it is undertaken, not as an incidental indulgence, but as an essential part of the system," that this rent shall be annually reduced when necessary. "To effect then the commutation of the share of grain into money rates, all the land was surveyed according to the native mode of measurement . . . there were no maps."

No! and it has been recently stated publicly, by a former member of the Madras Government, that not a single district in the Presidency possesses a scientific or accurate survey; and in most, either no survey has ever been made, or it was known to

have been hastily and carelessly done, and to have been *extensively tampered with afterwards.*

But to return to Mr. Campbell, "for the management of the village, the headman and accountant are made altogether Government servants, paid by Government," and "for the prevention of fraud on the part of these functionaries, reliance is placed on informers. Fifty per cent. of the assessment is allowed as a reward to any informer of concealed cultivation, &c., and it is stated that there are in almost every village dismissed accountants desirous of being re-employed, and unemployed servants who wish to bring themselves to notice, whose services as informers can be relied on." Before the rains the native collector makes "a statement preparatory to settlement. But this is by no means *the* settlement. When the crops are nearly ripe, the collector goes out into the district to look at them, and make his annual settlement. The village accountant makes out a statement, showing the cultivation of each ryot, his crops and circumstances, the number of his cattle, sheep, and children. . . . At this time, all who think they should not pay full rent, apply for reduction. All these cases are settled, and *then only* does the collector make up his annual settlement, grant formal leases, and take formal engagements for the crop, which by this time is *past*, and generally *paid for*. The settlement is not made up till *after* the crop is ripe, in fact generally does not reach the collector's office till *after* most of the money has already got there, and after making all the remissions and reductions of the season from the standard assessment." Yet this settlement is appealed to by the Bureaucracy at home as a proof of the regularity with which the assessment is collected in ryotwar districts!—Mr. Campbell goes on: "That the result of the ryotwar system in Madras is most unfavourable all parties seem to admit. The Madras men to whom I have talked candidly admit that at the present moment the state of things is most unsatisfactory—that the people are wretchedly poor, the land of little value—that the difficulty is to *get* people to cultivate it, on any terms—and that the cultivation is kept up by forcing, by Government advances, &c. &c. And, indeed, no one who has any experience of these matters can wonder that it should

be so. The idea of the British Government undertaking to perform the duties of immediate landlord throughout a great country, discarding all the assistance of the system which we found, the self-contained communities, and dealing singly with each wretched cultivator, is, to one who knows the trouble and difficulty of managing in this way but two or three villages, quite absurd. All experience, as well as all reason, is against it. Any indigo planter who has a village or two could tell the weary work, the coaxing and bargaining, and the management, the favourable leases given to some cultivators, the bad debts left by others; the thousand and one details of managing a village on this system; and the idea of one man so managing a couple of thousand villages is perfectly monstrous. . . . Only imagine one collector dealing directly with 150,000 tenants, not one of whom has a lease, but each pays according as he cultivates and gets a crop, and with reference to his cattle, sheep, and children, and each of whom gets a reduction if he can make out a sufficiently good case. . . . it is generally agreed that the abuses of the whole system, and especially that of remission, is something frightful; and that the opportunities of extortion, speculation, chicanery, and intrigue of all kinds are unbounded; while the reliance of the Madras collector on informers by no means mends the matter."

This, reader, is the "*excellent revenue system!* of great advantage to India, inasmuch as what goes into the pockets of individuals in this country goes there into the coffers of the State, and the country is pro tanto exempt from taxation!" Now from such excellent revenue systems, may the Lord deliver us! I have said that the true theory was established at last; but it was not a new theory—correct views had been held by individuals even before Lord Cornwallis's "Perpetual Settlement," and had been proclaimed by authority before the adoption of the ryotwar system in Madras. But it was reserved for one eminent man to collect into a focus all the scattered proofs which existed of the real nature of the Indian land-tax, and to establish the true theory on a basis which has never since been shaken, by a book published in 1830. This author, Lieut.-General Briggs, after having been the confidential assistant of Mr. Elphinstone, in all the difficulties of the second



Mahratta war, was employed at its close to settle large districts of the Peishwa's country, which gave him an unusual insight into the details of native administration; he afterwards enjoyed opportunities of extending and maturing his observations as resident at various native courts, and during a mission to Persia, and he brought to his task not merely the resources of a first-rate Oriental scholar, but the experience of a practised administrator and the caution of a diplomatist. The method pursued in his work was to travel bit by bit, over the whole surface of India, illustrating the true theory by an immense mass of historical testimony, native and European; which no writer has ever attempted to answer. I have not space to go into the details of this work, but the sum of its proofs was as follows:—1st. That the integrity of private property in land had been recognised in every village in India. 2nd. That Government had no right whatever to the land, but only to a share in its produce, that is to a tax, which did not affect the proprietary rights any more than the land-tax affects our rights in England. 3rd. That the Government share or tax was so *defined and limited* both by Hindoo and Mahomedan law, that Government had no title or precedent (except revolutionary ones) for taxing the people at discretion, and no more right to claim the property of the land and take its "rent," than a tithe-owner has to claim another man's estate because it pays him tithe. 4th. That the native institutions themselves, afforded a broad basis for our administration, and the only one on which we could establish a durable empire. A series of articles by the same author, adding new proofs of the correctness of the above views, have recently been published in the "Indian News" journal, Nos. 227 to 233.

The above work produced a strong impression on the mind of one of the most illustrious politicians of that day, Lord Wm. Bentinck, who at length saw, happily for some of the natives, that the land in India was held on exactly the same conditions as those in which a man possesses a house, or a horse, or a dog, or land, or any other property in England, namely, that the Government might assess it to pay a settled tax, and attach and sell it if the tax was not paid; but that this tax was no more

"rent" in India than it is in England. The fact is that *tax* and *rent* are two things different in their nature, and acted upon inversely by given circumstances; for instance, *rent*, or the annual premium paid for the use of land, increases per head with the increase of population—*tax*, or the annual contribution to the expenses of the State, as a rule diminishes per head with the increase of population; and in this way the taxes of England have been very much lightened per head in the last half century.

But to return to Lord Wm. Bentinck; this enlightened and sincere friend of the natives, when Governor-General of India, took the first opportunity of embodying the recommendations of the above work in a series of regulations, which he sent to General Briggs, then Resident at Nagpore, for correction, and which were the foundation of the North-Western Settlements. I must refer the reader to Mr. Campbell's book for the details, but the principle of these settlements was to ascertain and define first, the extent, nature, and value of the lands, and the rights of their owners, and then, securing the rights of these owners, to settle the tax on a moderate assessment for a term of thirty years, liable to a fixed decennial increase if a certain quantity of fresh land is brought into cultivation, at the same time carefully preserving the native institutions, that is to say *the village system*, working through that, and collecting the tax from the representatives of the different villages.

And now, what does the reader think of the Government forcing its Madras system upon Bombay, not only in spite of Mr. Elphinstone's strong opposition, but in spite of his strongly expressed opinion in favour of the village system (for he anticipated long before the conclusions of Lord Wm. Bentinck), and let the reader think of the Government doing this about the time when it was compelled to avow the ruinous consequences of the "excellent revenue system," in Madras! However, such was the case; and although Mr. Elphinstone's great name enabled him to resist ryotwar settlements as long as he was Governor, the doom of the ryots was sealed when he went home, and the "excellent revenue system" was soon after introduced in Bombay. Of course this method of "wholly untaxing" the

people by taking their rent, soon reduced them to a state of pauperism in Bombay, as it had done in Madras, and not until they were so reduced, did the Government agree to any reduction in the assessment:

A revision, meaning a reduction, of the assessment is now going on in Bombay, but has only yet gone over the southern portion of the Presidency, and it is stated in the "Friend of India," of October 21, 1852, that before this revision, "no ryot ever knew one year what he might have to pay the next, and whatever he paid, or whatever exertions he might be induced to make, he still found an unaccountable amount of arrears hanging over his head. There was no rich landowner to stand between him and the Government, no capitalist to bear the first pressure of a bad season, but he just scrambled on from year to year, and took to flight when the grievance became too great to bear. The collection was, in fact, based upon the same principle as that which to this day governs taxation in Egypt, viz. to take from the peasant everything that can be squeezed out of him and then to make a merit of remitting the remainder."

With regard to "rich landholders" and "capitalists," I have alluded to the progressive destruction of the native aristocracy in my sixth chapter; and the ruin of the country gentlemen and principal farmers by our over assessment is noticed in Mr. Giberne's evidence before the Commons' Committee of 1848; also in a letter dated 1849, from a gentleman high in the Company's service, quoted by Mr. Bright, in the House of Commons, saying: "*many of the best families in the province who were rich and well to do when we came into Guzerat, in 1807, have now scarcely clothes to their back,*" &c. &c.

I will conclude this chapter by exposing the stupid fallacy, worthy of a bureaucratic Government, which assumes that a land-tax is the best of all taxes, and the Indian revenue must depend upon it. In the first place it cannot depend upon it, for it is notorious that the Government cannot tax the land any more, and the Indian finances are now in a state of the most dangerous embarrassment from the insufficiency of the revenue. In the second place, a land-tax is not the best of all

taxes, not only because Adam Smith and others have shown that a money tax on land must soon become unequal, but because it is a direct tax on produce, which is always the form of taxation least productive to the Government and most oppressive to the people. To say that it is "best" to raise three-fourths of the revenue by a direct tax on produce in India, while we only raise one-fifth of the revenue by direct taxation in England, is a gross and glaring contradiction. Yet, conceive our adopting the "best" principle and attempting to raise three-fourths of our own revenue by a direct tax on the land? Why, the Customs alone pay above twenty-two millions of our net revenue! so that the system is evidently absurd in our own case, or that of any other civilised nation,\* which a Bureaucracy calls best in India; though it is really quite as absurd there as anywhere else—and it has led to the cruel over-assessment of the people, and the perpetual grasping of the Government for more direct revenue, by confiscating Native States and the landed properties of the Native aristocracy, without saving the Indian finances after all from falling into a situation of extreme peril.

How different is this result from that obtained by a Native Government which encouraged the commerce of its subjects. General Briggs has shown that one of the wealthiest Native States, before our time, that of Malabar, had no land-tax at all, and had a very large revenue without one. Yet the Bureaucracy, as I will endeavour to show in my sixth chapter, have done everything to destroy, and nothing to help the commerce of the natives. I am reminded by the subject of this chapter, of one of the effects which would ensue, if commerce was possible, to the natives of India. It is notorious that they have a passion for wearing gold ornaments, and to such a degree, that these used to be a sort of criterion of their family wealth; and it is stated in a pamphlet by a late member of the Bombay Government, and has been confirmed to me by several old Indians, that under the operation of the "excellent revenue system," which ground them down, till, it was reported by a Revenue Commissioner before the late revision of the assessment, that "the straits to

which the cultivators were reduced, were not merely those of the most coarse and homely fare, but he believed the far greater proportion could not afford for themselves one daily plentiful meal, of any sort of grain, throughout the year:—"under this process, of course, their gold ornaments and every atom of gold has disappeared from among them. Now, the consequence of a considerable reduction of the assessment in the South of Bombay has been to cause a vast increase of cultivation and a glut of produce, which absolutely rots in the interior for want of a market, and brings back the old difficulty of finding money to meet the assessment. Yet if commerce was possible to these people, and I will endeavour to show in my sixth chapter that it is impossible, not only could they sell their produce, but they would get back all their family treasures, and share with other civilised nations in the benefits arising from the sudden and enormous increase of the precious metals.

However, it is hopeless to ask the Home Government to encourage the commerce of the natives. It is impossible for any man to judge of the unfitness of a Bureaucracy to comprehend the interests or conduct the affairs of a great empire, without having had to deal with the Home Government of India. Burke's description of the statesmanship of a Bureaucracy is not in the least exaggerated: "there is no trade so vile and mechanical as Government in their hands. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of states, passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it, for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. Littleness in object and in means to them appears soundness and sobriety." It is in vain to ask such a class as this for any enlightened measures of Government. It is in vain to prove to them, year after year, that such a return of part of the taxes in public works, as is the undoubted right of the people who have been "wholly untaxed" by taking their "rent," that this would produce an increase in the Indian revenues, of which no man could foresee the end—that it would re-establish the finances; relieve the cultivators; restore the capital we have exhausted; and replace the trade we have destroyed. All such appeals, either in private or in the

Court of Proprietors, are rejected as a romance, and resented as an intrusion :

"I'll have my bond ; I will not hear thee speak ;  
 I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,  
 To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield  
 To Christian intercessors. Follow not ;  
 I'll have no speaking ; I will have my bond."

So they will indeed ! they are now goading on the Bombay Government to seize the Enams in that Presidency ; they have taken away many of these estates which had been in the same families for centuries ; and as I show in my sixth chapter, they are in a course of confiscating the territories of Native Princes, whose dynasties date in some of the Rajpoot States from 2000 years back, and whose ancestors resisted Alexander the Great.

To bring these things home to the reader, let me suggest a parallel case in England, to what we do in India. Our "great Duke," and our only one, has just passed away from amongst us. I leave his services to the record of history and the praises of posterity ; my business is only with a certain estate given to the Duke and his heirs by the nation, to reward those services. Now let me propose to my countrymen, to show our national gratitude, by pauperising the present Duke and Duchess of Wellington ; and to show our honour and good faith by confiscating Strathfieldsaye. Is the reader shocked at such an idea ? but it does not shock our Indian Government in the least. Does the reader think the present Duke's title to his property is something sacred ? but so is a native gentleman's title to his Enam. Does the reader think the confiscation of Strathfieldsaye would be a very meagre addition to our revenue, after all ? but we see in India that a number of estates taken in this way, do something. Can the reader still hesitate ? has he yet another scruple ? will he say that no empire can be durable which is not just ? why then, in God's name, let him help to stop the injustice of our Indian Government.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM.

IT was one of the greatest evils of the Ryotwar settlements, that they subverted the indigenous municipal institutions of the country. These institutions had formed the basis of every successive empire in India for ages; and they were so rooted in the hearts of the people, that when allowed to retain their cherished privilege of local self-government, they were comparatively indifferent to the title, or creed, or nationality of their rulers, and indisposed to political combination, because they enjoyed a simple and satisfactory administration of civil and criminal law. However, the English, who first acquired territory in the most disorganised part of India, and were then entirely ignorant of the systematic structure of native society—the English rashly assumed that an ancient, long-civilised people, possessing the elaborate mechanism of old governments, suited to their manners and domestic circumstances, grown into a second nature by custom, and to this day working admirably under good rulers—that such a people were a race of barbarians who had never known what justice was until we came among them, and that the best thing we could do for them was to upset all their institutions as fast as we could, and among others their judicial system, and give them instead a copy of our legal models at home. Models, be it remembered, against which we have been inveighing for at least a century and a half, and which have at length become so odious that we have radically changed a great part of them, and may possibly condemn still more. But even if the technical system of English law had worked well at home, it would have been the grossest political empiricism to force it on a people so

different from ourselves as every Oriental people are; and considering that it did not work well, even at home, the reader may conceive the irreparable mischief it has done in India. It is lamentable to contemplate the pictures given us of its demoralisation of the natives; and the more so, because this demoralisation is progressive, so that the worst results are found in our oldest possessions.

There was some excuse for the Government which introduced this system of "artificial technicalities," in its profound ignorance of every native institution, including those rational methods of dispensing justice peculiar to the country. But nothing can excuse the Government, of the present day for maintaining such an abuse; nothing can even account for such mal-administration, except the fact, that the Home Government is an irresponsible Bureaucracy. What makes this disregard of the rights of the natives (their right to be well governed) more flagrant in the present instance, is the fact that ample information has long since been supplied to the Government of the evils of its own judicial system and the merits of the native one. Indeed this last has been retained, and is working with complete success in the latest of our territorial acquisitions; for somehow or other we always know how to give the native good government, when we have strong motives for doing so: as in the Punjab, where it is our interest to conciliate a martial people, newly brought under our sway; and in Mysore, where it is our interest to reconcile them to the prospect of absorption. But, says Mr. Campbell, the Punjaub "having had the benefit of our previous experience, the best systems have been introduced." This is no excuse for the Government, but an aggravation of its injustice. Equity would require that the unfortunate people at whose expense our experience has been gained, should be among the first to benefit by it. For it has cost our old provinces dear, this experience! We have experimented upon their population, as if in corpore vili, while we were finding out what were "the best systems;" and now we have found them out, we do not give these unfortunate people the benefit of them. •

However, I object to the word "introduced" in the above



sentence. Mr. Campbell's partiality for the Civil Service leads him to speak of our successful administration of the Punjab, as if the Civil Service had invented a revenue and judicial system which we have only adopted, and which is some centuries older than our empire in India. Long before we knew anything of India, the fabric of native society had been characterised by some peculiar and excellent institutions, viz., by a municipal organisation, providing a most efficient police for the administration of criminal law, while the civil law was worked by a simple process of arbitration, which either prevented litigation, or else ensured prompt and substantial justice to the litigants. It may be worth while to add some details on the subject of these institutions.

The village was the germ of the whole political system of native States. The constitution of a village was the model of that of a town consisting of more than one parish; and so on, till the village became a city; each branch of the municipality increasing as the community enlarged, until the single smith or carpenter of the village was represented by the guild of his trade in the city; and in every case the freeholders forming a corporation which managed the municipal revenues and police, and was the organ through which the Government transacted its business with the people. As a rule, all over India, there were three classes of ryots or cultivators in every village: 1st, the freeholders or proprietors of the soil; 2nd, a class like copyholders, who rented of the first, but could not sell nor be turned out of their holdings while they performed their engagements; 3rd, a class of tenants-at-will; the mechanics, police, &c., were paid partly by tax-free lands, and partly by a fixed portion of the produce of each field. Of the above, the landlord class alone was responsible to the Government for the taxes, which were assessed on each member of this body by its elective council, and the surplus rent, after paying Government dues and municipal expenses, was divided among the freeholders, in proportion to their share, large or small, of the property: but there was nothing like "communism" in this division, except the sort of communism we have in many parishes in England, viz., a freeholder's right of pasturage on the village common, where there

happened to be such a thing. The two most useful functionaries in this municipality were the head-man and the record-keeper; both generally hereditary officers, but requiring the confirmation of Government. The head-man was the village magistrate, tax-gatherer, coroner, &c., and had a limited civil and criminal jurisdiction, though in the village council, he was simply "*primus inter pares*." The record-keeper was quite as important an officer as the first, for nowhere in the world were the records kept with more accuracy and statistical detail than in India. The village books contained a register of every field, with dimensions, names of owners, crops sown, &c., with every particular of the possession or alienation of real property by sale, heritage, or transfer, and as the sale of land was one of the most formal processes in all the native institutions, and every circumstance of the transaction was recorded, it was comparatively easy to ascertain the truth in cases of disputed right. Finally, the village chief and record-keeper were represented by corresponding functionaries at the head of each native district or county, who thus connected the local with the general administration, and were the organs of communication between the Government and the people. For instance, in the imposition of any new tax, the native Governments always took care to obtain first the assent of the local authorities; stimulating their self-interest on such occasions, and profiting by their influence over the people. Whereas, our Government has sometimes goaded the natives into open resistance, by making them feel that they were neither represented nor consulted in its arbitrary imposition of new taxes. It was the county chiefs spoken of above, whom Lord Cornwallis mistook for great land-owners; though they were really only great tax-gatherers; and to whom he transferred the landed property of their districts by his Perpetual Settlement.

But certain conditions were exacted from these municipalities under the native system in return for the privilege of self-government. Each community was responsible for a due performance of its police duties, under heavy penalties; as were formerly the "hundreds," in England. They were bound to produce or trace the perpetrators of robberies or outrages committed within their

limits, or else to make good the amount lost, or submit to a fine imposed by the Government; and partly owing to this responsibility, partly to the peculiar fitness for their employment of the Aborigines who fulfilled the police duties, there was no part of the municipal institutions of an Indian village more perfect than its police system. Marvellous stories are related of the sagacity of this native police, who have been known to trace criminals from one county to another, sometimes for weeks together, until they succeeded in apprehending them, and wherever we have destroyed the native institutions and disorganised this force, a great increase of crime has been the consequence. Bengal is a melancholy case in point; and I must continually direct the reader's attention to the fact that wherever we have upset the native institutions, and put inventions of our own in their place, it has produced a great and progressive increase of crime. But it was in the administration of civil law that the merits of the native system were most conspicuous. The Judges were appointed by the King, and sat as his representatives, and the central courts in the capital, and local courts in the districts, corresponded to the old European model: with this difference, that as there was no set of functionaries in the Native Courts, as attorneys and special pleaders, whose livelihood depended on their practice, the Indian judges had a motive for suppressing litigation, and they maintained a system of arbitration, comparatively inexpensive to the litigants, greatly facilitated by the exact and minute record of real property, and scarcely ever leading to appeals to a higher Court.

It is worth while to add a sketch of the forms in Native Civil Courts; as they are still existing and working to admiration, wherever we have not destroyed the native institutions and introduced our system of "artificial technicalities." After the plaintiff's petition is received by the judge, he must attend when it is read in court, to answer any interrogatories the judge chooses to put to him. The defendant is then summoned and required to answer in writing, and it is the duty of the judge, at this stage of the proceedings, to endeavour to effect an arrangement or compromise, and obtain from the parties mutual releases; in which case, this first process is final. Failing in this, the judge proposes

to them an arbitration of friends, generally accepted when the parties are dealing fairly with one another—and then the forms of a regular trial are enforced by an officer of the court, who has power to compel the attendance of witnesses, the production of papers, &c.; the award is made a rule of Court, and this second process is final too. When one or both parties refuse this method, they are required to give securities, the one to prosecute, the other to defend the case. The Court then summons a number of individuals of the same profession or rank as the parties, out of whom a certain number are selected, any of whom the plaintiff or defendant has a right to challenge; the Court deciding on the validity of objection. The parties are then required to sign an instrument agreeing to submit their cause to this jury, and pay a certain fine to Government if they appeal against the decision (this meaning appeal costs), and after the hearing of the cause, before the decree is passed, they are required to sign an affirmation of the fairness of the proceedings. An officer of the Court attends to regulate the forms, as in the Arbitration Courts, and in this way several suits may be conducted simultaneously in the same Court. When the decree is given, the judge awards their costs to jurors, witnesses, &c., and decides who is to pay them. In the event of an appeal, the appellant must enter into recognizances to pay the expenses, but an appeal beyond the district seems to be unheard of, and this simple mode of dispensing justice, minus English law and attorneys and special pleaders, is to this day completely successful. It is not that lawyers do not exist in Native States, but that the Court alone can summon them, if it requires their advice or assistance; the parties cannot hire them under the native system, as they do under our system, to defeat the ends of justice.

Such then is the native judicial administration as it still exists in many parts of India, and did exist everywhere; and so well did it work, that Mr. Elphinstone can only account for “the flourishing state of the Mahratta country,” in spite of the obvious defects in its government, by attributing it to the judicial part of the native institutions. And now, in lieu of this simple and rational mode of dispensing justice, we have given the natives an obscure,

complicated, pedantic system of English law, full of, "artificial technicalities," which disable the candidates for justice from any longer pleading their own cause, and force them to have recourse to a swarm of attorneys and special pleaders, that is of *professional rogues*, according to Mr. Campbell, to conduct their cases, by which means we have taught an ingenious people to refine upon the quibbles and fictions of English lawyers, and become such adepts in the science, that the course of justice, civil as well as criminal, is utterly confounded in a maze of artifice and fraud, and the natives, both high and low, are becoming more and more demoralised, as they become more dexterous in applying all the "sharp practice" of English law.

The author of "Modern India" has given a very graphic description of our system, but I can only find room for an outline of his revelations. He says that some men go out from Haileybury, who are not, and never can be, fit for the duties of the Civil Service; that in the course of promotion, men are changed from one department to another with a totally different set of duties at every step—frequently posted to different parts of the country where they do not understand the language of the people; and that they only hold the same office on an average for two or three years without interruption, which gives little opportunity for acquiring the local knowledge necessary for administrative duties. As the rule, promotion goes by seniority, and so the most indifferent officers attain a certain rank in time, and the higher appointments are sometimes long blocked up by elderly men, never brilliant and now inefficient, worn out in body, mind, or temper, yet who cannot, or will not retire.

When a collector is old enough, he is made a judge—and to this step there is almost no exception if it is wished for. "It seems to be considered, that if at this time of life a man is fit for anything at all, he is fit for a judge; and if he is fit for nothing, better make him a judge and get rid of him; for once in that office he has no *claim* to farther promotion by mere seniority alone." Altogether, it happens that few above mediocrity remain to be judges, and of those who do, many are disappointed men; and in both divisions of the Bengal Presidency they are promoted

to be judges late in life, with no previous experience whatever of the principal portion of their duties, civil justice.

These judges are nervous, captious, and timid; disposed to overstrain forms and exaggerate technicalities, and to rush into the extreme of legal niceties and quibbles; they are unwilling to convict on reasonable evidence—some, unable to make up their minds, and thinking acquittal the safest course—some, considering themselves charged with the interests of the prisoner as opposed to the magistrate, and seeking for every argument for acquittal, substantial or technical; and finally they are prone to feel that their consequence depends upon actively interfering with and checking the magistrates, and to give prisoners the benefit of every doubt on their minds, reasonable or unreasonable, rather than face the responsibility of convicting them. “Transferred to the superintendence of a large judicial machinery, after having spent the best of their years and energies in other employments, it is hardly to be expected that they would well perform so difficult a task.” Such being the judges, let us see what are the laws.

The criminal law is a patchwork, made up of pieces engrafted at all times and seasons on a groundwork of native codes, nearly covered and obliterated; in fact, by practice and continual emendations, there has grown up a system of our own, and the Sudder Court, composed of the judges described above, are in the habit of issuing authoritative “constructions” of regulations and points of practice: but successive judges pretty often vary their constructions. In the civil law the Government has scarcely interfered at all in the laws regulating property; but precedents and “constructions” have swelled out into a large and complicated legal system, quite undigested and unarranged, and the judges of one day are constantly altering the constructions of their predecessors. Such, then, being the judges, and such the laws, and the police being inefficient, except in the Punjab, where “the wholesome ancient system is more exactly adhered to,” let us see how the system works, and first in criminal law. It appears that the magistrate has greater facilities for eliciting the truth than the judge; by questioning the witnesses, whose

evidence is all taken down in writing, and ascertaining that they understand what is recorded; and the author hardly ever knew evidence to be at all perverted where the parties, the magistrate, and the witnesses all spoke and understood the same language. Moreover, in the new territories there is a habit of confessing among the people; though this is exchanged for a habit of denial in the clearest cases when they find out the many judicial chances of escape under our system. Altogether in new territories, an efficient and experienced official can very well get at the truth in most cases; but there is a great deterioration in the course of time, from which Mr. Campbell infers that lying and perjury are quite as much due to our judicial institutions as to the people. It appears that the judge prefers deliberate statements as the best legal evidence; while the magistrate can to some extent ascertain the character and history of the witnesses, and does a good deal towards weighing them properly. But still experienced criminals, and especially the professional attorneys about the Courts, do much to baffle him; witnesses are sent up well crammed and cautioned to tell a connected story, and not to tell too much; and when the case after a long interval goes to the judge, the evidence is worth literally nothing. All the witnesses are thoroughly well up in a thrice-told tale. Nothing is to be made of strings of such witnesses directly contradicting one another. The judge can get little more out of them. To him a witness is a witness, and he knows nothing else about him. "The civil courts are the great schools for perjury, and in our older possessions false witnesses for criminal trials can easily be procured from thence." At the trial one of the magistrate's clerks does the mechanical duties of a prosecutor, and nothing more. The prisoner may produce any number of fresh witnesses he pleases, and has a right to counsel; although there is none for the prosecution, and "the professional advocates are the most unscrupulous of men." Finally, though the form of a jury is preserved, the judge generally puts into the box some of the pleaders, and such people about the Court—intimates to them very broadly his opinion—they always agree with him—and there is no more trouble. Under this system there is a great increase of crime; most marked in our

oldest possessions ; and "the Dacoits have now got the better of the laws !" It would be very odd if it were otherwise !

Now let us see what is the system in civil law.. When the plaint is lodged, which is generally long, rambling, circumstantial, exceedingly exaggerated, and full of irrelevant matter, a notice is served on the defendant, or stuck up in the village where he is supposed to reside, requiring him to file an answer in a certain number of days. If he does so, the plaintiff is called upon for a replication, the defendant for a rejoinder, and so on, each paper containing all kinds of assertions, accusations, and technical objections, and refusing to admit the plainest facts. This being completed, issue is supposed to be joined, that is to say, the judge has before him a mass of the most prodigious contradictions which unscrupulous subtlety can deliberately prepare in writing, and great quantities of irrelevant matter, and then he appoints a day for trial. Issues of law and fact are all joined at the same time. In the trial the judge is not permitted himself to make any effort towards the discovery of the truth. Everything is left entirely to the management of the parties and their professional advisers, who avail themselves of every weapon, fair and unfair. Perjury, forgery, and fraud, are altogether rampant in the civil courts ; in fact, the whole system is one of highly perfected fencing with such weapons. The parties marshal up their own prepared witnesses, produce their own documents, and apply for reference to particular records. The judge would not on any account refer to the records of his own or the collector's office, except on special application from one of the parties. He scrupulously restricts himself to the *worst* evidence, and having heard that he decides as he best may. If either party commit any error of form, it is fatal to his cause. If the defendant does not appear in the manner required, the decree goes against him by default, and the first he hears of it is in the seizure of his lands and goods, after which he has no legal remedy. In execution of decrees personal property is distrained, &c. Against the possessor of landed rights the process is exceedingly simple. They are at once sold by auction without reserve to the highest bidder in satisfaction of the decree ; or if certain rights are decreed, they are at once made over by precept



addressed to the collector, who must implicitly obey, however inequitable he may know the decision to be, and however inconsistent with the rights of others. Such then is the system of civil law, and the worst of it is, we have succeeded in giving the natives a taste for this system of "artificial technicalities," which thrives amazingly; and as most people are frequently involved in litigation in some shape or other, the whole country is demoralised by it, and the lowest villagers are becoming up to many "dodges" of the law. Finally, our author says, "the judicial oath as it is used, does not in the very least affect the evidence. And yet this is not because the religious sanction of an oath is unknown to the people. On the contrary it *was* nowhere stronger, and this is another of the changes caused by our system. In a new country I found that a solemn oath was astonishingly binding, not gabbled out lightly as an everyday matter in the courts of justice, but taken on rare occasions, after the fashion of the people themselves. But such binding oaths do not exist in our older provinces. The judicial oath is much too common-place an affair to carry weight, and the people seeing perjury practised with impunity, become used to it. The longer we possess any province the more common and grave does perjury become."

Such then are our judges, and laws, and administration of what is called civil and criminal justice in India. And the maintenance of this demoralising system is the more iniquitous that Government is aware of the evil, and conscious of the remedy. That remedy has been applied in the Punjab, and the reason for adopting it is thus stated by Mr. Campbell:—"After a long trial of the working of the old courts, it may be supposed that the Government was little inclined to extend their operation, and the system was so radically vicious that there was no amending it except by altogether sweeping it away and commencing *de novo*." He then gives the details of the Punjab administration which the reader will find is the same native system described in the beginning of this chapter. The remedy then, and the only one, is to return to that local self-government, and simple mode of administering justice, indigenous to the country, and congenial to the manners of its inhabitants. A remarkable instance of the

success of returning to native principles is given by the historian, Professor Wilson, where he relates how a Bengal magistrate succeeded in putting down gang robbery in the district of Burdwan. He says: "The instruments employed were the neglected and undervalued institutions of the country, animated by skilful superintendence and encouragement. The landowners and headmen of the villages and various trades, were called upon to enter into engagements for the performance of those duties, which it was personally explained to them they were expected to fulfil, and the village watchmen were punished for neglect or connivance, and rewarded for courage and good conduct. Attempts to deprive them of their service lands were sedulously resisted, and the villagers were encouraged to give them more liberal subsistence. In this instance it was unequivocally shown that the co-operation of the people was to be had, and that when had it was efficacious. Notwithstanding this evidence of the feasibility of a different system, no attempt was made to act upon it on a more extensive scale." No! instead of that, in spite of every evidence, and warning, and remonstrance from the most competent authorities, the Government has deliberately gone on breaking up the native system all over the country, except in the North-west Provinces and the Punjab, and yet, owing partly to the short date of our Empire in the greater part of India, and partly, to the extraordinary tenacity with which the people cling to the most characteristic parts of their social structure, although we have subverted the fabric, we have nowhere succeeded in destroying the elements of their institutions. The utter destruction of a village, says Sir John Malcolm, and dispersion of its inhabitants for hundreds of miles, and for thirty years at a time, cannot prevent its instant re-establishment when force is withdrawn. At that signal the people at once reappear, the lost records are recovered, every field is recognised and claimed, the hereditary village officers, even when infants, are reinstated, and the little municipality resumes its place and reasserts its nature. The village institutions, he says elsewhere, will after the scenes they have survived, be indestructible, unless the strong hand of power breaks up establishments which have for ages formed the basis of all Indian Governments. Yet

this is what the strong hand of English power continues to do in our old provinces; to break up establishments which ensured the natives a good administration of civil and criminal law, and to maintain the shocking abuse of justice exposed by Mr. Campbell. For I ask the reader whether such a judicial system as this author describes be not an offence to God and man? It seems contrived on purpose, not merely to render person and property insecure, and to stop the means of encouraging every kind of industry, but to force, as in a hot-bed, every evil tendency of the native mind; to paralyse confidence between man and man; and to deprave a whole people as much as it is possible for laws to deprave them. And after the abuses of this judicial system have been notorious for about half a century, especially since the Commons' Committee Report of 1810, can Parliament pretend to believe that the bureaucratic Government which has maintained them, has done its duty to the people of India? Can Parliament venture to prolong the secret, irresponsible despotism of such a Government, for another twenty years?

## CHAPTER VI.

### FINANCE AND PUBLIC WORKS.

SOME of the most sagacious of princes, such as Diocletian and Queen Elizabeth, have complained that it was next to impossible for even a wise and good ruler to find out the truth, when it was the interest of his ministers to combine together to deceive their sovereign.

Never was this more strikingly exemplified than by the mystification of England with regard to the condition of the natives of India, by the bureaucratic Government to which England commits her authority over them. Never was it more true that, "what flatters the sovereign generally forms the misery of the people;" as we shall see when I examine what those "blessings of the British Rule," which England imagines she confers upon India, really are?

The most curious thing is, that although the imposture of the day is invariably exposed afterwards, the exposure never seems to reach the mass of the people of this country, but the next grand deception of the Indian Government is just as successful as any former one. This reminds me of the following remarks of Machiavelli on the Borgias: "So simple are men, and so prone to obey any impulse from without, that whoever is willing to deceive them will always find those who are willing to be deceived. Alexander VI. never did anything else than deceive men, nor thought of any thing else, and none ever asserted more confidently, or swore to promises better and kept them less, than he did; nevertheless his deceptions always succeeded, to a wish, because he understood that part of the business of life thoroughly." And this is the

only part of the business of life which the Bureaucracy seems to understand; however, if the reader has the patience to go through this chapter, I will show him that unless we entirely and immediately change our system, and relieve India from the incubus of a Bureaucratic Government, our affairs in that country cannot be saved from utter ruin: indeed it will be no easy matter to save them now!

As the home authorities always treat the question of public works as one of finance, I will take a leaf out of their book, and consider the subject in a financial point of view. What is it that now renders the state of the Indian finances dangerous and unsafe, and far more so than they were in 1842, when Sir Robert Peel strongly expressed his alarm about them? It is the steady increase of debt; the almost invariable deficit; the non-increase, the decrease in some instances, of the tax-paying power of the people; coupled with the unhealthy symptom of an unnatural weakness in this tax-paying power, and the confession of the Indian Government after it has tried taxes on everything susceptible of an impost, that it cannot carry taxation any further. Is not such a condition of the finances of a great empire enough to alarm any foreseeing statesman?

One source of revenue has indeed increased, and just in time to save us from adding several millions more to the debt, but as this source of revenue is one which forms no test of the general ability of the people to pay taxes, although it now contributes about one-eighth of the net receipt of the Indian Exchequer, it adds to the danger of our situation, that this duty on opium is liable to great fluctuations, and might any day be immediately and finally extinguished (one-eighth of the net revenue!) by an act of common sense on the part of the Chinese Government; viz, by its permitting the cultivation of the poppy at home. Surely, when the reader considers the actual embarrassment of the Indian finances, the yearly peril of losing one-eighth of the net revenue, and the confessed inability of the Government to impose more taxes, he must feel how deeply our own interests are involved in placing the finances of India on a sounder footing; for as the case stands, although it would ruin England to lose her empire in India, it is threatening our own finances with ruin to be obliged to keep it.

The most startling point to English eyes is the small tax-paying power of the people. A comparison with our own happier land will show the significance of this fact. In England the people pay on an average 2*l.* per head of population annually in taxes; yet so far from the industry of the country's being crushed by such a burthen, the people never were so prosperous before; in case of war they could evidently raise a much larger sum for the service of the State, and in peace the yield of the taxes increases with such regularity that a Chancellor of the Exchequer may calculate on a surplus of about two millions sterling every year. In India the people pay only 5*s.* 4*d.* per head, and, deducting the opium monopoly and about half a million of tribute from foreign States, the natives literally pay only 4*s.* 5*d.* per head of population annually in taxes; and yet by its own admission the Government cannot raise any larger sum in case of an emergency, and so far from the yield of the Indian taxes regularly increasing and affording a surplus nearly four times as large as that of England, in proportion to the number of the people, the Indian revenue would be actually declining at this moment without an increase of territory which brings a corresponding increase of charges.

Is it not clear that there must be something radically wrong, something completely rotten in such a state of things as this? The people are described by Mr. Campbell and others, as being full of industrial energy, and "well fitted to accumulate capital." Why then are they so wretchedly poor? What has become and does now become of their productive capital? For it is evidently stationary at an unnaturally low ebb, if it be not even diminishing. Aye! we must ask it sooner or later; and the longer we delay the greater becomes our own danger. What has become of the productive capital of India? I am sorry to say the question opens a dark page of English history; for it is impossible to investigate this subject without recognising the effect of foreign mal-administration in draining away the capital of the natives of India. Independent of the illegitimate gains of the last century, of the enormous sums of money abstracted from the country in the good old times, when it was possible for a young Englishman to go out

with nothing at all, and return at the age of thirty-four with a fortune of a million sterling (vide the histories of Clive, Paul Benfield, and scores of obscure "Nabobs"); independent of the savings of English officials, who monopolise the most lucrative employments in the State, and go home, of course, when they have realised a fortune—independent of the "resumptions" of landed estates and the gradual extinction of the native princes who spend their incomes in the country, to make room for more English officials—in other words, to provide more patronage for the Home Government—independent of all this, there is a regular drain in hard cash every year of about three millions sterling from India, for claims in England designated "the Home Charges."

Now, it has been said by the historian, Professor Wilson, that the transfer of surplus revenue to England is "an exhausting drain upon the resources of the country, the issue of which is replaced by no reflux; it is an extraction of the life-blood from the veins of national industry, which no subsequent introduction of nourishment is furnished to restore;" and some such effects must result from the annual transfer of so large a proportion of the produce of Indian taxes to England. To bring the case home to our own feelings, let us conceive ourselves to be subjugated, and obliged to ship off annually, without one farthing of return, the same proportion of our taxes, which would be more than eight millions sterling, to some foreign country; to see besides, foreigners occupying all the valuable appointments in our public service, and going home with their fortunes, and our great landed estates in a course of gradual "resumption" by the Government; how would our productive capital stand such a drain and such a system as this? Should we not, at least, expect when we remitted our eight millions, to have a good administration in return for our money? We might be sure our foreign masters would keep the peace in the country for their own sakes, but should we not expect them to do something for ours? particularly if they prided themselves on being a very Christian people, much superior in morality to ourselves? Should we not expect to have an equitable revenue system, and a salutary administration of justice, and above all, considering our heavy tribute, to have

our means of production encouraged and assisted? or at the very least, that our foreign rulers would not crush us to the earth by throwing cruel and wanton obstructions in the way of our industry? Well, modest as these expectations may seem, they have all been disappointed by the Government of an English bureaucracy in India.

I have shown what sort of revenue and judicial systems have been vouchsafed to the natives, and will now show what has been done for their trade. But first, in order to appreciate the obstacles which have mocked the hopes of the natives, and doomed their industry and skill and the natural blessings of their soil to the curse of unfruitfulness, it is necessary to understand clearly that trade is the instrument of production. This point is so important, that I must be excused for dwelling upon it a little.

The reason that trade, in other words, commerce (*commutatio mercium*), or exchange, is the instrument of production, is this: exchange permits that *division of labour* which alone gives value to labour, by enabling different men to obtain articles of utility or luxury, which they perhaps could not produce at all, or could only produce with great difficulty and loss of time—in return for other things which, from their education or genius, or soil or climate, they can produce with ease. Until, therefore, commerce or exchange is introduced into a country, and as long as every body is obliged to produce and manufacture everything he requires for his own consumption, men remain of necessity in a state of barbarism and extreme poverty, from which they can only emerge in proportion to the division of labour effected by their progress in commerce. And in the state of barbarism or non-exchange, men are inclined to be idle because they can get no reward for being industrious; but when commerce or exchange introduces the division of labour, and gives a value to labour, by offering men what they covet in exchange for their own productions, then the idleness of the savage is gradually transformed into the industry of civilised man. It has, therefore, been laid down as an axiom that “facility of exchange is the vivifying principle, the very soul of industry.”

But, when it is clearly understood that exchange or commerce



is the instrument of production, it becomes evident that whatever in any country renders this instrument too expensive to be used, is so far mortal to that country's industry; and that in any country where goods cannot be brought to market without an enormous waste of time and money in carrying them hundreds of miles over "mere tracks;" then, in the same degree that the want of roads in such a country deprives the people of the instrument of production, viz., commerce or exchange, to the same extent it must forbid progress; it must ensure poverty; it must stop industry, and prevent the division of labour; it must neutralise God's blessing on the soil; and tend to keep the inhabitants barbarians and paupers. In applying this conclusion to India, I must remind the reader that as trade is the instrument of production, every unnecessary obstacle to the trade of the natives, which the Government has either thrown in their way or else neglected to remove in fulfilment of its acknowledged duty, has been so much positive repression of their means of production, and so much destruction of their capital. Yet I undertake to prove that the Government has inflicted both these injuries on the people of India; it has at one time thrown the most ruinous obstacles in the way of their trade, and at another time declined to remove obstacles when admitting that it was its duty to do so: nay, incredible as it may appear, it has even prevented others from doing so. And the consequence is, that at this day the trade of India is but a miserable fraction of what it ought to be, and the pauperised natives cannot afford to pay taxes enough to keep the finances in safety, to the danger and discredit of England. As an example of this, it is worth noticing that the total estimated receipts from the land and sea customs of India for 1850-51, are only one million nine hundred odd thousand pounds, including six hundred odd thousand pounds for salt, which, since the reduction of duty, is fast underselling and superseding the Government manufacture, and annihilating the revenue from the salt monopoly. Now, here is a great fact! the customs of a mighty empire, abounding in noble rivers and fine harbours; possessing thousands of miles of coast; and rich in natural products; in cotton, tobacco, coffee, tea, silk, sugar, sandal-wood, linseed, flax, rice, tallow, wool, nut-

meg, cinnamon, pepper, indigo, and a vast number of grains and fruits; and containing a naturally intelligent and industrious population, larger than that of all Europe, once indeed containing hundreds of thousands of merchants, manufacturers, and country gentlemen in the interior of the country, whom we have ruined,—the total customs of such an Empire only yield 1,974,556*l*!

(And at the same time it is said that England is paying twenty millions sterling a-year more than necessary for supplies which she could obtain at a cheaper rate from India). I know it is asserted in answer to the above “great fact,” that no considerable increase in the customs revenue of India is possible, for the following reasons—*that*, the native is contented with a little rice for his food, and scanty clothing for his dress, and his *few wants* do not dispose him to profit by the advantages of commerce. I should not answer such drivelling as this, if I had not observed that no mystification is too gross to be imposed on unthinking people with regard to the natives of India; as, however, everything must be answered, I will remark—1stly, That if the native were so easily *contented*, he would be different from all the rest of the human race. 2ndly, That the assertion is contradicted by our experience; for whenever the natives in our employment, or in private occupations, gain more than the mass of the people, they immediately indulge in better food, better clothing, finery of all sorts, equipages if they can, and vying with one another in ostentatious entertainments, which are rather astonishing in a people of *few wants*; in short, they go on like the rest of the world. 3rdly, I believe that the passions of vanity and sensuality are much more common to men—I say nothing about women—than the passion of avarice, which is always the vice of the smaller number, and the Indians might be reproached for extravagance on high feasts and holidays, but not for avarice. Perhaps I may as well give one example, out of many, to show that the *few wants* of the natives are all moonshine:

The scene of the following occurrence, cited by Mr. Chapman, was a district inhabited by the most uncivilised tribe in India. Mr. Forwick says:—“Our speculations in the country threw in a circulation of about one lac of rupees (10,000*l*.) yearly; the

effect of this on the condition, appearance, and comfort of the Ghonds was remarkable within the first year, and continued to improve. Those who were seen with a piece of cloth scarce covering their nakedness, were hardly to be recognised with decent 'dhotis,' good 'booputas,' &c. Some even carried this so far as to rival the gayest of the civilised who came there with us. The Zemindars and others were glad to buy, when they could afford it, chintz handkerchiefs, or a piece of red broad-cloth. Penknives, pocket-knives, and scissors, became much in demand. The men led the way, but the women soon began to fancy a 'sarree' and a 'chowlee' would not display their charms to less advantage."

From this it appears that among uncivilised people men are vainer than women! and that the natives are ready enough to profit when they can by the advantages of commerce. In fact, India has been famous for her commerce all through history, till the reign of a Bureaucracy, and the traces of former wealth, and even luxury, are visible all over the country. After all, this is an old story that the commerce of India is not susceptible of increase. When it was proposed to throw open the monopoly of the Indian trade in 1813, the organs of the Bureaucracy vehemently asserted, among other pleasant things, to wit, that the destruction of the monopoly would "subvert our Indian Empire," "sacrifice the happiness of the natives," and "imminently endanger the British Constitution!"—besides these cheerful views, they insisted upon it that the experience of two centuries had proved that the Indian trade *could not increase*.

Well, the export of the Company was then about one million sterling, and Parliament faced the above terrors so far as to allow private traders to compete with the Company. In 1882, the export had risen to nearly four millions, and the Company's share of it had dwindled to 149,193! On this Parliament took another step in advance, and suspended the Company's right to trade, when, without visibly "endangering the British Constitution," the export rose rapidly to six millions and a half, about which average it has stopped for the last ten years, showing that a new limit has been reached, where we are again told that the Indian trade *cannot increase*.

However, having gone so far, I may as well mention what the new limit is, and after explaining it, I shall, although very nervous at the thought of "the British Constitution," I shall venture to propose the removal of an obstacle which prevents the expansion of Indian trade to about eight times its present amount. Mr. Chapman has shown it to be a general statistical law that the consumption of our manufactures by the various civilised countries of the world, is in the proportion of our facilities of communication with the localities where those manufactures are consumed. Thus the consumption of our cotton-manufactures by the British West Indies is of the value of about 14s. per head of the population per annum; by Chili, 9s. 3d.; by Brazil, 6s. 5d.; by Cuba, 6s. 2d.; by Peru, 5s. 7d.; by Central America, 10d.; by India, about 9d.; and by Mexico, a country as roadless as India, and not possessing natural advantages corresponding to the navigable rivers of Bengal, by Mexico, 8d. per head per annum. Moreover, Mr. Chapman has shown that even of this small average for India, the natives supplied through Bombay only take one-half, because they want the means of communication, which, to some extent, nature has afforded to Bengal and Agra by their rivers.

The unavoidable inference from the above is that our Indian trade is at present limited to the coasts and shores of one or two rivers, in that great empire, and that we can hardly be said to have a trade with the interior, owing to want of means of transit and of tolerable communications, all over India, and in every one of the Presidencies, not excepting Bengal and Agra, as I will show by and by. This, then, the want of roads, the want of *cheap carriage*, this is the new limit to the trade of India—this is the only reason why it *cannot increase*, and why a people described by Mr. Campbell as industrious and intelligent, and whose "native capitalists eagerly embark in all kinds of enterprises," and why they are "contented with a little rice for their food," &c. &c. &c.; because it is at present physically impossible for them to avail themselves of commerce for want of means of transit.

I may as well notice here the obligations of the Government with respect to public works in India. I have already observed that common humanity should induce us to encourage and assist

the means of production among a people, from whom we drain so large a proportion of their capital, and I have shown how the want of roads in any country tends to keep its inhabitants barbarians and paupers.

I must now remark that in India, where not only the princes but the native aristocracy, who used from religious motives to be most liberal in executing public works; are fast disappearing under the influence of our dominion, in India as in China, it has been the immemorial usage for the State to construct many indispensable public works for the people. In India it is recognised as an historical fact that part of the revenue is received by the Government as trustee for the people, to be disbursed in public works; and not only was this duty inculcated in the institutes of Tamerlane, and discharged by all good Mogul and Hindoo Sovereigns, so that the country is covered with the ruins of works executed by them, but its obligation to fulfil this duty has all along been admitted by the British Government in theory, though not reduced to practice.

Nevertheless, one of the witnesses who most distinctly admitted this obligation before the Committee of 1848, offered some excuses for the neglect of public works by the Government, and I must now show what they are worth. Mr. Mangles stated, that the means of constructing roads, &c., could not be raised as in England by local taxation; and added, on the prompting of Sir James Hogg, that "with reference to the indisposition of the natives to anything that is new, tolls could not well be levied on roads and canals as a means of reimbursement." Well, supposing they could not, the Government has always been repaid indirectly for any such work, by the "magical effect," as Mr. Williamson Ramsay called it, of a new road in creating wealth in India. I will give one of the instances cited to the above Committee by General Briggs, of the effect of opening a new ghaut on the Comptah road: "incomplete as the road was, the traffic of the port of Comptah during three years had increased from 160,000 to 400,000, and the customs had also increased from 4,662 to 18,016 within the same period."

But could not tolls be levied? Mr. Mangles said, "the

Indian strenuously resists any effort at new taxation; and cited the resistance of Bareilly to a police tax to prove the fact. Now Mr. Mangles ought to have known that the sedition of Bareilly was caused by the brutal tyranny of a low overbearing native, who was placed at the head of the police by the British authorities, and empowered to introduce a law which should supersede the old self-government of the city; although this ruffian had notoriously been guilty of many acts of oppression and extortion, and was at that very time a public defaulter himself who for four years had set the collector at defiance. And when Mr. Mangles said that similar measures of the Government were "always resisted à l'outrance," he ought to have known that the very same measure which was resisted at Bareilly was adopted without the slightest resistance in Bengal (as in other places), because there the Government conformed to the custom of the country, and introduced the measure through the agency of the natural chiefs and representatives of the people; and it is worth remarking, that the effect of this Government measure of substituting its own police for the old local and municipal police, has been the almost utter privation of protection and safety to person, property, or honour, throughout Bengal.

It is not the case therefore that Government cannot impose new taxes, if it introduces them according to the custom of the country; and allows the people to feel that their representatives have been consulted previously; the only real difficulty is to conceive any tax that would be new in India! for everything has been taxed already, down to shops and implements, down to such things as fishermen's nets, workmen's tools, and barbers' utensils! and this odious tax is still levied in Madras. It is no doubt true that public works cannot now be constructed by local taxation in most parts of India, because the Government has drained the people of their capital by its vicious revenue system, and deprived them of the power of voluntary effort for a while. But if public works were constructed they could be maintained by local taxation; which is now doing and has done a good deal in India. For instance, the Indian press has for some time past noticed the fact of large towns such as Kurrachee, Surat, Mussoorie,

Shahjehanpore, several others under the Agra Government, and Lahore, Broach, Belgaum, Poona, &c., coming forward one after another to avail themselves of enactments permitting them to levy local rates for sanitary and municipal purposes. Again, when Lieut.-General Briggs was administering the province of Candesh he actually began making roads at a time when the ryots were better off, by purely voluntary local contributions; and I have known the same thing done elsewhere. Another gentleman who had succeeded his father as a landowner in India, told the Committee in 1848, with reference to the co-operation of the natives in making roads, "you can do anything with them if you only reason with them and show them you mean it for their benefit, and not for a fresh subject of taxation." He added that local taxation might be resorted to for the maintenance of roads and bridges, and instanced a case where he had made a road and established a ferry, assigning the toll of the ferry to the maintenance of the road; but subsequently the Government had doubled the toll on the ferry, and refused to give anything for the repairs of the road: and he said that in his experience a very large fund raised from the tolls on ferries in Malabar, was appropriated as surplus revenue (contrary to an express law), and not applied to the making or repairing of roads. The same complaint is made to this day in Madras, and I shall presently notice a similar complaint in Bengal.

With regard to the natural disposition of the natives to contribute to public works, it is worth noticing that the Indian journals in the different Presidencies regularly publish an annual list of the public works constructed by private individuals among the natives; and one opulent Parsee merchant of Bombay has actually spent in this way, on roads, bridges, tanks, wells, caravanserais, schools, hospitals, religious edifices, &c., the enormous sum of 130,000*l.* sterling. On a former occasion, March, 1850, in noticing the fact that the anxiety of a rich native to build some public work was often frustrated by the want of a small addition to the sum he could devote to it, and in vain recommending the Government to encourage this spirit by making up the deficiency, "The Friend" quotes the following passage

from Colonel Sleeman: "The respectable merchants lay out their accumulated wealth in the formation of those works which shall secure for them from generation to generation, the blessing of the people of the towns in which they have resided and those of the country around."

But to return to Mr. Mangles, I have shown that this gentleman was under a mistake when he stated that the natives "resist à l'outrance" every attempt to impose a new tax; but when he added that "owing to their indisposition to anything that is new, tolls cannot well be levied," he made a very considerable mistake indeed for an old Secretary of the Board of Revenue and an East India Director. In the first place tolls on the roads, under the name of transit duties, but real *bonâ fide* tolls, have existed from time immemorial in India, and we have always levied such tolls. In the second place, tolls on the ferries were established by the Ferry Act of 1819, which provided that the surplus profits, after paying the expenses of the ferry, should be applied to the making and repairing of roads, bridges, &c. &c., and I have shown how the Government violates this law. In the third place, tolls on the public roads, passed by local Acts, have been in operation in the Bombay Presidency for more than a quarter of a century, and the following result of experience will show whether tolls cannot be looked to as a means of reimbursement. The Government have made in all Western India but one bit of bridged and macadamised road into the interior, 72 miles long, and this is a road made for purely military objects, and leading not to any great mart for commerce, but to the garrison town at Poonah. Nevertheless, one toll on this road which yielded in the first year 400*l.*, now yields regularly about 4000*l.* per annum, and on the strength of such a receipt a company was formed at Bombay for the purpose of making roads in the interior as a private speculation, if the Government would allow them to levy tolls, whose amount it was to fix itself; which offer, with the characteristic jealousy of a bureaucratic despotism, the Government refused!

But the most unaccountable mistake of Mr. Mangles was in asserting that our transit duties were such duties as had always existed in Native States. This renders it necessary for me to



re-establish the facts of the case, not merely to prove that the Native transit duties were simply tolls, but to show that the Government has done all it could to destroy the trade of India, and we are bound to make the natives all the reparation we can for such injuries. The only authority I will refer to is Mr. Trevelyan's Report, mentioned in terms of praise by Mr. Mangles.

This report says, that as the transit duties came to us, they were merely tolls on quantities, paid by instalments, according to the distance travelled, just like English turnpike tolls; so light that no one thought of evading them, and requiring no forms or permits, so that every one could come up to the toll-bar without fear; and though different kinds of articles might sometimes be charged at different rates, and the number of different rates was much fewer than in England, the utmost the turnpike-man could do was to ask a slight additional toll, and on its payment let them proceed, without search or detention under any circumstances. The Report thus describes what the Government made of these duties; after having in its own phrase "consolidated" them, that is, taken for their standard the whole amount of tolls levied on goods going the greatest distance (so that a Kensington gardener bringing a few potatoes to London, would have to pay as much as if he took them from Land's End to Edinburgh) Government enacted that the toll was not to be levied at the toll-bar, but only at the Custom-houses. At these Custom-houses, which were comparatively few in number, and frequently a hundred miles off, the tolls were to be paid and permits granted for the transport of goods, when the Collector was at home to sign them; though as this functionary was often away on what he considered much more important business, and the clerks required feeling to hurry them, and there were legions of applicants, permits were not always to be had under several days—(so that the Kensington gardener would have to go and wait a few days at Birmingham for a permit to bring his potatoes to London).—"That such should be the state of our Customs regulations," says Mr. Trevelyan, "is a remarkable historical fact which will not easily be credited by the next generation."

After the permits were granted, at the rate of ten per cent. for metals, and five to ten per cent. for other articles, with five per cent. extra for what were supposed to be the principal towns, and fifteen per cent. *more on Indian than English* piece goods, and ten per cent. *more on Indian than English* metals; after the permits were granted, and the goods reached their destination, nothing more was required than to send to the nearest Custom-house and take out "divided permits" for their distribution. "This," says Mr. Trevelyan, "is a fact worthy of being recorded for the information of posterity. If we were to encourage swamps, or accumulative mountains between the different districts of our country, we could not paralyse their industry so effectually as we are doing by this scheme of finance."

However, when once the permits were obtained, the goods were as free as air, and the men at the toll-bars, happily named "Chokeys," had nothing more to do with them than simply to ascertain their exact identity; that they were neither more, nor less, nor other, nor superior in value to, nor packed in a different way from, the goods specified in the permits; to search them if they had a doubt on one of these points; to confiscate them if they could prove any difference; but if they merely thought so, "which they can always do," says the Report, only to detain them till they could or would write to the collector, perhaps a hundred miles off, in a roadless country, and get instructions on the subject. "If," says Mr. Trevelyan, "it were desired to depress the productive power of Indian industry to the greatest possible extent, could any scheme be devised for the purpose more effectual than this? Although we have now ocular demonstration of its existence, yet when it has once been abolished, the world will find it difficult to believe that such a system could have been tolerated by us *for the better part of a century.*" Remember that, reader, *for the better part of a century!*

But as these men at the Chokeys evidently had the power to choke the whole trade of the country, what sort of men did the Government provide for the purpose? Wonderful to relate! Although they had in fact no salary, for their pay, less than that of many workmen, was entirely swallowed up by the necessary

expenses of their office in stationery, &c. ; although there never was a service, says the Report, in such a state of utter degradation ; although these functionaries were universally hated and despised, they could not accept their places without forfeiting all pretensions to character, and their name was synonymous with that of rogue ; yet their post commanded a high saleable price, and a place in the Customs was looked upon as a certain fortune. Forced, according to the Report, to get their living by extortion, their brutal tyranny and insults to women were almost certain of impunity ; the merchant would not complain, for he dreaded nothing so much as their simply doing their duty, and acting up to the letter of the law, by which they could at any time stop the trade of the country ; and the native travellers and pilgrims, though loud enough in private complaint, could not afford the time and money necessary to go back to the spot and identify and prosecute a culprit. The consequence was that the trade, the very existence of the people, could only be maintained by an universal system of fraud and smuggling ; the rich were obliged to carry on their business in collusion with the chokeymen ; the poor were their daily victims ; and thus, by the agency of these scoundrels, supported by the range of patrols, did the Government "convert the whole surface of the country into one chokey," and a monstrous system of universal excise subjected the industrious part of the community to the most cruel penalties.

"The truly barbarous and destructive state of things above described," says Mr. Trevelyan, "had no existence, under the Native system ;" and he reiterates that "it will appear almost incredible in another age that a system which belongs only to times of barbarism should have been deliberately established, and obstinately persevered in by us." And while the reporter insists again and again on the "utterly barbarous" and trade-destroying effects of this system, he is quite as much shocked by its "pernicious effect on the national morals." He says, "this system may be said to be productive of universal crime,"—"it is a great moral pest,"—and he explains how it corrupts the whole body of the people. Here I cannot help exclaiming, shall we forever be content to listen to "the annual concert of praises, sung

from year to year, upon the Indian government, and the increasing happiness of the Indian people, when they are all the while sinking into deeper poverty and wretchedness ? ” shall we for ever be satisfied with the solemn plausibilities of public despatches and Haileybury addresses, when it invariably turns out afterwards that the natives have been cruelly oppressed ? Will the English heart never beat for India, a country that has contributed so largely to our wealth and greatness, and to which a generous people owe so much protection, and kindness, and justice ?

To resume: Mr. Mangles took credit to the Government for having abolished the transit duties, “in consequence of Mr. Trevelyan’s Report.” I find as usual that Mr. Mangles was under a mistake. In the first place, unless such a true friend of the natives as Lord William Bentinck, backed by a high reputation, and a strong political connexion at home, had ventured to call for this Report, the transit duties might have gone on to this day. In the second place, it was not the Report but the public scandal, and the weekly reprobation by the Indian journals of this “curse of the country ;” it was, as the “Friend of India” has said, the constant and reiterated remonstrances of the press which at length forced the reluctant Government to repeal these duties. The reader may judge by the dates: the Report was dated January 1st, 1834, and these duties were not abolished for two years afterwards in Bengal, four years afterwards in Bombay, and ten years afterwards in Madras, where there was actually greater oppression than I have described—ten years after such a Report as Mr. Trevelyan’s! Moreover, judging from the habitual insensibility of the Bureaucracy to the welfare of the natives, shown by protracted over-assessments and other things, I believe it was not merely the public scandal in the press which caused the abolition of the transit duties, but the argument of their assailants, that, owing to the efforts of trade to escape from such trammels, and the multiplication of chokeymen to prevent it, and its destruction of other sources of revenue, the system was ending by entailing a loss of money on the Government.

And now is it not shocking to feel the proved impossibility of getting any such grievance as this redressed by Parliament ?

This is proved by experience to be the present state of the case. The only chance of the natives to get any bad system altered is that the Bureaucracy may themselves think at length that they are losing money by it; but it always requires years to get any change made in the strongest cases: and meanwhile, until after the change, the public in this country are kept entirely in the dark as to the existence of the grievance, and mystified as usual; and it is hopeless to complain to the House of Commons. In that House, any accusation against the Indian Government, though backed by as much presumptive evidence as is required for any grand jury presentment, is sure to be voted a bore and treated as a calumny. It is sufficient for one or two official men to get up and cite every occasion on which the Government has done right, omitting to mention the long previous pressure from without which forced it to leave off doing wrong; then to admit that there may be some trifles in which the Indian administration is not quite perfect yet, though with regard to the particular grievance complained of, "all the stories about that are without foundation;" and, with regard to the other trifles, really Government is going ahead as fast as it can, and doing everything to make everybody happy and comfortable; and on this sort of routine explanation, the few members who are left, just enough to make a House, these few decide that the official is right and the complainant is wrong, and get rid of the subject with a precipitation which shows that India is the bugbear of members of Parliament.

I appeal to the debate of June, 1850, for proof of what I say: considering the excessive and all but insuperable difficulty of finding out anything about mal-administration in India, considering that no information can be procured except from such unwilling witnesses as the servants and dependents of Government itself, it was evident, on the occasion I refer to, that where so much was proved, in spite of every difficulty, the accusation could be fully proved if a fair trial were allowed, and yet the House at once refused a fair trial. And what is the consequence? That as the Bureaucracy feel that no amount of injury to the natives, and no degree of danger to the interests of England

will induce Parliament to interfere, "it takes years of private reports, and then years of public notoriety and scandal, to get any grievance redressed in India." Such has been the case in instances of the most cruel over-assessment, of the non-employment of the natives, of the judicial system, the transit duties, and various other things, and so it promises to be in the case of public works.

I will pause here to mark the progress of my argument. I began by showing why the natives might expect to have their means of production encouraged and assisted by their foreign rulers; and why, exchange being the instrument of production, they might expect that our Government would do everything to help their trade, and nothing to repress their industry, and prevent the accumulation of their capital, when it had to support the annual drain to England. Nevertheless, I undertook to show that because the Government had thrown some obstacles in the way of their trade, and not done its duty in removing others, the capital of India had been lost, its commerce wasted away, its finances involved, and its people broken in spirit and in fortunes. I have therefore shown, first, what the Government has done to destroy the commerce of India by transit duties, "deliberately established and obstinately persevered in, for the better part of a century," and only recently and reluctantly abolished; and I will now show what injuries the Government has inflicted by not making roads, &c.

It may be as well to begin by giving an example, as the illustration, not the measure, of this injury in the history of a particular branch of commerce, because the reader will then understand better what an oppression this bureaucratic Government is to the producers of India, and because there is no question in which it is more necessary to expose the mystifications of the Home authorities than the one of Indian cotton. I will notice in passing the magnitude of our national interest in this question. Our cotton manufacture now employs one-eighth of the population of the United Kingdom, and contributes one-fourth of the whole national revenue, or more than twelve millions sterling per annum. And such a manufacture is now

dangerously limited to one foreign source of supply, and exposed under immense and increasing competition; to the risk of a short crop in the one country of supply; from which cause a loss of eleven millions sterling was suffered by our manufacturers in 1850, besides the curtailing of employment and falling off of consumption on such occasions. Moreover, the monopoly of supply by America not only raises the price, but, from the possibility of war, slave emancipation, &c., exposes us to the risk of a cotton famine in some unlucky year; and, after what I have stated above, the reader may imagine the awful, the possibly fatal, effects of such a catastrophe in England,—and all this while India might, though she could not do it at a moment's notice, send us plenty of cotton, and is only prevented from doing so by mal-administration.

Now to put a stop to the trick of doubling back from one exploded argument to another, by which the organs of the Bureaucracy have made the debate endless, I will here recapitulate and answer categorically the different excuses made by the Government advocates for the scanty supply of Indian cotton; at the same time I will cite good authorities to show what a supply of cotton India might send to this country, and to show that the sole cause of her not doing so is the neglect of its acknowledged duties by the Government.

The latest excuse turns on freight. It is said that the reason why Indian cotton cannot compete with American, is the greater distance and excess of freight from India. An eminent politician told me, on official authority, that "the fact was, freight had more to do with the question than anything else; and the reduction of a halfpenny a pound or so in the freight would make all the difference." Now admitting, for the sake of argument, that a halfpenny a pound would make all the difference, I should like to know, considering ~~that~~ the freight from India is always less, and often much less than a halfpenny a pound, whether our men-of-war are to be employed in importing the cotton, or what other means we have of reducing the cost of freight to less than nothing? Besides, when politicians believe that the reduction of a halfpenny a pound would make all the

difference, what do they think of the fact that the Bombay Cotton Committee, composed of Government officers as well as merchants, estimated the loss arising from the present defective mode of inland transit, caused by the want of roads and bridges, as an addition to the cost of Indian cotton of a penny a pound? Do they not think that if the reduction of a halfpenny a pound *in freight* would make all the difference, the reduction of a penny a pound *in carriage* would have pretty nearly as good an effect? Not that I dislike the idea of reducing the cost of freight to less than nothing, but I cannot recommend it till I know how it can be done; meanwhile, as I do know how the cost of carriage can be enormously reduced, I confine myself to recommending the construction of roads, bridges, canals, quays, &c. &c. I have one final difficulty about making a difference of a halfpenny a pound in freight between India and America. There lies before me a report from a large importing house, dated Sept. 27th, 1852, on the average rates of freights on cotton for the preceding twelve months, from India and America, and these rates are as follows:—

Bombay— $\frac{1}{3}$ nds of a penny per lb.

New Orleans— $\frac{1}{2}$ nds of a penny per pound.

I now come to the excuse of "residence." The Government organs have repeatedly asserted that it was the fault of the merchants themselves that the trade in Indian cotton did not progress satisfactorily, because they would not establish resident agents in the cotton districts. In a book published last year on "the Culture of Cotton in India," by a Leadenhall-street authority, this step of establishing residents is more than ever recommended as being the *sine quâ non* of success in the Indian cotton trade. Now, I might answer that it is "the nuisance of our civil courts, and the revenue system we have established," and the difficulty of making out a title in the present defective state of our laws, which, according to the "Friend of India" for July 29, 1852, most effectually prevent any European from embarking his capital in land. However, let us see what the merchants have said themselves, when thus charged, in fact, with incapacity or ill-will by the Government, for not establishing



residents. Their answer has been, that they have tried it on several occasions, and found it did not pay. This ought to be conclusive, for it narrows the debate to a matter of fact, and one would think that to such a fact there could be no reply. Nevertheless, the Government does attempt to answer and disprove this fact, by entering the market itself as a purchaser, and making speculations in cotton, which are proclaimed with great triumph in the book above-mentioned, to persuade the public of this country that it would pay to establish residents, and not only pay, but yield a profit of something like fifty per cent.

Now, it may seem very good-natured of the Government to go out of its way and engage in commercial transactions, on purpose to teach the Bombay merchants their business; the more good-natured, because by so doing the Government violates a stringent provision of the law, and incurs a penalty which would be very serious if it were not understood that its responsibility to Parliament is only a fiction of the law: for the law prohibits any commercial transactions by the Company's Government, on the penalty of forfeiting the charter. However, the good-nature of a Bureaucracy is not a thing to trust to; and there is something which Lord Bacon calls "the turning of the cat in the pan" at the bottom of it, which I must now explain. The reader, then, who admires the pains taken by the Government to teach the Bombay merchants the necessity of establishing residents in the cotton districts, the innocent reader will be surprised to hear that this necessity was first proclaimed by the merchants themselves, and urged by them in a letter from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce to the Government eleven years ago, which not only explained the importance of this step to the success of the cotton trade, pointing out the great benefits which had resulted from the residence of Europeans in the interior of Ceylon, but, clearly described those obstacles to its adoption which it was in the power of Government to remove, which it was its duty to remove, and which nevertheless remain in full force to this day. One of these obstacles was that want of roads, &c., which I shall presently notice. Another arose from Government regulations, framed

apparently on purpose to prevent the residence of Europeans in the interior, on the pretence of controlling them. For although it is supposed in England that Europeans may now freely settle everywhere in the interior of India, nothing can be more contrary to the fact; but the real state of the case, as it remains to this day, is explained in the above letter, from which it appears that Europeans can only settle in the cotton districts by permission of the Government, on a short lease, and under the liability of *being any day turned out of the country at once by a Government officer, and having their property confiscated, without any judicial appeal being allowed!* It is on such security as this that men of business are recommended to invest their capital in expensive establishments, which would require the certainty of a long term of possession to offer the prospect of paying.

From the date, then, of this letter, for eleven years at least, the Government has been aware of insurmountable obstacles to the residence of Europeans in the cotton districts, which it might, at any time, but will not, remove. The Government is also aware that it conveys no real information about the profits or loss of agency, by the assertion that its functionaries, already in the districts, maintained there at charges and risks which are an "unknown quantity," and possessing an influence and other advantages which no mercantile agent could ever enjoy—that these functionaries occasionally make successful speculations in a few hundred bales of cotton. Why, then, does the Government go on boasting of speculations which prove nothing, and inculcating the advantage of establishing residents, as if there were no difficulty in the matter, except that of teaching the merchants their own interest? For this reason—such language is not meant for the merchants, who thoroughly despise its hypocrisy, but it is meant for the public of this country; yes, the people of England must be systematically deceived and "mystified," as usual, in order that, instead of seeing in the want of European residents in the interior, another proof of bureaucratic mal-administration, they may actually pity the Government which prevents such residence, for its want of support by the merchants, and blame the merchants who have fruitlessly attempted residence under the existing

obstacles, for their incapacity or ill-will—such are the artifices required to defend a bad cause!

A new attempt is now being made by Messrs. Ritchie & Stuart to establish a resident in Candeish, towards the Berar valley, where Mr. Fenwick failed a few years before, for want of means of transport. It remains to be seen whether this attempt will be persevered in as long as Mr. Fenwick's was; meanwhile the successive market reports of Messrs Ritchie & Stuart will show the gradual results of their experience.

The first, dated July 1851, asserts that, "*progress* (they print the word in italics), *progress* is wholly out of the question until we have improved means of transport from the interior." The second, dated December, 1851, says: "We have repeatedly before remarked upon the want of good roads, as being the fatal bar to any material increase of trade in other parts of the Bombay Presidency (*other* applies to Scinde); and nowhere else in the world, probably, would this want of means of transit, to, from, and within regions of great natural resources be tolerated. We have but one made road worthy of the name, that through Candeish to Agra, and even it is in some parts almost impassable for laden carts; yet from this road branch off those bullock-tracks by which the bulk of the produce of the fertile valley of Berar finds its way to Bombay, and our own province of Candeish yields a gross revenue of nearly a quarter million sterling, of which so small a pittance is allowed for outlay on roads, that it has been insufficient even to keep in repair those fair-weather tracks which have from time to time been made."

The last report, dated June 25, 1852, says: "Another season has elapsed without anything whatever having been attempted towards the improvement of our means of communication with the interior. No previous season has shown more palpably how seriously the want of roads impedes the trade of the country. Berar, for instance, has produced this year the finest cotton crop we have seen for many years, if ever; the quality of much of it is superior to the best Broach, and the cultivation of such cotton can be almost indefinitely increased in that province; but to what purpose, so long as it cannot be conveyed to the coast, where alone

it can be converted into money. A large portion of the crop is still in the districts, and will not reach Bombay until November, and therefore much of it, in fact, will not be dispatched until the following crop is being picked, owing to the difficulties of transport over the wretched bullock-tracks, which alone are available for two-thirds to three-fourths of the journey to Bombay. Even the high-road, which serves for the remainder of the distance, is in many parts in a disgraceful state; and in a very interesting report by Captain Wingate, Revenue Survey Commissioner, just printed by the Government, that officer describes it as the frightful and thoroughly execrable road from the Thul Ghaut through the Concan."

Finally, the market report of Messrs. Ritchie & Stuart's English agents, Messrs. Finlay & Co., one of the largest importing houses of Liverpool, gives the following table, and remarks upon it, under date of January 22, 1853:—

	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.
American	1,018,361	1,396,571	1,247,322	1,500,369	991,110
East Indian	254,881	181,992	239,718	155,045	94,670
Other kinds	124,894	165,055	196,670	201,446	157,740
Total import	1,398,136	1,743,618	1,683,710	1,856,860	1,243,520
Total export	138,320	121,410	150,000	133,900	194,200

  

	1847.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.
American	873,130	1,374,249	1,477,251	1,181,956	1,396,168	1,784,388
East Indian	222,820	227,582	182,079	299,142	325,662	213,183
Other kinds	138,060	137,077	246,283	266,392	181,645	343,951
Total import	1,234,010	1,738,908	1,905,613	1,747,490	1,903,475	2,341,522
Total export	221,850	189,500	256,300	270,737	268,617	282,516

"From the preceding tables it appears that the importation of East India cotton during the last eleven years has been nearly stationary, whilst that of American has increased during the same period from 1,018,361 bales, to 1,784,388 bales. Prices of each description being now nearly the same as in 1842.

"When we look for the cause of so great and rapid an increase

in one country, whilst there is none in the other, we at once point to the fact that during the last eleven years the means of internal communication in America have been wonderfully improved, whilst in India nothing, literally nothing, has been done to facilitate and economise the transport of produce to the coast. In America about 11,000 miles of railway have been opened for traffic, and in the three presidencies of India not above 100 miles in all are in progress of formation!

“Before America grew a pound of cotton, India produced from cotton grown upon her own soil finer muslins than all the skill of Manchester can even now rival from the finest Sea Islands, costing 2s. 6d. per lb.! India still possesses the same soil, climate, and population; and with half the length of railways which are now open in America, and with the navigation of her magnificent rivers improved, she would compete successfully with all other countries in supplying Great Britain not only with cotton, but with wool, hemp, linseed, and many other articles which cannot now be brought to the coast, on account of the expense and delay of transport, and she would at the same time be able to increase her consumption of English productions in the same proportion.”

I now pass from the excuse of residence, to that of assessment. The Government organs say, firstly, That over-assessment can no more prevent the cultivation of cotton than that of grain—the ryot will naturally grow what pays him best. Yes, but we know practically that wherever cultivators are reduced to the verge of pauperism, they always prefer to grow the most prolific vegetable food—potatoes in Ireland; rice in China; coarse grain in India; and the injury done by over-assessment has been to prevent the improvement of cultivation in the whole course and series of production; not in cotton alone, but in every crop requiring labour and capital.

Secondly, It is said that Government is revising the assessment. Aye, did anybody ever hear of an abuse in India without hearing this sort of excuse for it? They come down from Charter to Charter, the old abuses, ryotwar, judicial, zemindary, public works, &c. &c., and yet Government is always doing something to reform them. The “intelligent clerks” in Cannon-row and

Leadenhall-street continue to be in the act of reforming a notorious abuse, and yet the natives continue to be its victims from one generation to another—such is the rule of a Bureaucracy! It appears now by the following extract from the market Report last quoted, that this revision of the assessment is not even commenced this summer in the largest, richest, and most productive portion of the Bombay presidency, and Mr. Campbell does not scruple to insinuate, p. 374, that the delay is intentional, and arises from the desire to keep the revenue screwed up to its present amount. Here are the words of Messrs. Ritchie & Stuart's circular: "This Report of Captain Wingate, to which we allude, has reference to a contemplated survey and re-assessment of the Province of Candeish, which is contiguous to Berar. The vast importance of this measure will be judged of from the following statistics, which we extract from the Report, and which will probably not be deemed out of place here, nor fail to be of interest, as showing how truly our trade with the interior may be said to be yet in its infancy. The whole province of Candeish contains 12,078 square miles, of which it is intimated that the arable portion is 9772. Of this *arable* area 1413 square miles are cultivated, and 8359 are lying waste. The population of the whole province was 785,991, according to a census taken in 1851. The number of villages in the whole province is 3837, of which 1079 are now uninhabited. The soil of Candeish is stated to be superior in fertility to, and yields heavier crops than that of the Deccan and southern Mahratta country. Although so much of the country now lies in waste, the traces of a former industry are to be seen in the mango and tamarind trees, and the many ruined wells which are still to be met with in the neighbourhood of almost every village. Of the five-sixths of the arable land, the five millions of square acres now lying waste, Captain Wingate farther remarks, nearly the whole is comparatively fertile, and suitable to the growth of exportable products, such as cotton, oil-seeds," &c.

I have two more points to notice before I quit this subject of assessment. In the Ryotwar districts it is usual for the native money-lenders to make advances to the pauperised ryots (at usurious rates which no European could ask), and the necessity of

the ryots is thus asserted by the Report of the Cotton Committee of 1848:—"They are indebted to the money-lender or banker of the village, for the means wherewith to procure the seed, and to carry on even the most imperfect cultivation. They give him security for these loans on the growing crops, which at maturity they frequently dispose of to him at prices regulated rather by his will, than by the standard of an open market. It is asserted that the rate of interest paid by these unfortunate ryots is often forty or fifty per cent." Besides these loans, it is customary for the Government to advance a part of the expense of cultivation, and whenever it makes such an advance, it secures repayment, not by exacting an exorbitant interest, but by a summary process of recovery, which works well in practice, and insures it against any serious loss. Under these circumstances, the merchants who wish to promote the cotton cultivation, and can only do so by making advances to the cultivators, have asked the Government to give them the benefit of its summary process as being the only legitimate means, according to its own experience, of avoiding heavy losses; and the Government—which professes such a desire to see residents in the cotton districts—the Government has refused their request.

Again, not only have the poor cultivators had to suffer from over-assessment, never revised in any district until the population were reduced to pauperism, but up to within a few months they have suffered from the oppressive mode of collecting the land-tax. They were obliged to deposit the cotton-seed when picked, in damp pits, from six to ten feet deep, where it remained without protection, exposed to the night-dews, dust, &c., until the revenue was settled, and then it was taken out of the pit so much deteriorated in colour, strength, and cleanliness, that no process could repair the mischief. This pernicious practice, as the merchants called it, has been persisted in by a Government professing anxiety to promote the Indian cotton-trade, until the very eve of the Charter discussions, showing that the fear of Parliamentary responsibility is the only motive which can force the Government to do its duty.

"The last excuse I have to notice is that Government is now,

and has long been, conducting experiments with a view to improve and extend the cotton cultivation of India. On this I must observe that, one experiment the Government has not tried, viz., the one which produced the desired effect in America. For Mr. Chapman has shown that only thirty years ago American cotton was as dirty and deficient in staple as Indian cotton is now; and that it was the ordinary inducements of free commercial interchange, which stimulated the American cultivator into increasing the supply, and improving the quality of his cotton, to what we see it now; because no Government destroyed his capital by claiming the rent of land, and ruined his commerce by "transit duties." If, therefore, while the Bureaucracy was depriving the ryot of any interest in extending and improving cultivation by rack-renting him, and leaving him roadless, without the means of freely exchanging his produce with foreigners; if at this very time it had really expected to effect supernaturally by "the exotic attempts of a few Government officers," that development of the cotton trade which was effected naturally in a rival country, by the stimulus of free interchange acting on self-interest, then the very insanity of such an expectation would save it from a serious answer. However, it is not the folly but the hypocrisy of the above excuse, which I have to expose, and my answer to it will be very short.

The author of the book on "the culture of cotton in India," although he gives us hundreds of pages about these Government experiments, admits that they "have never had any permanent effect in improving the cotton from India." He also admits that the trade in Indian cotton is a "question of price;" that it is capable of indefinite extension; and that its great evils arise from its not being a regular trade, but a small irregular demand upon the China and home markets for dirty cotton. These facts are admitted by the Government apologist himself; well then, because the Government continues to use means, its experiments, which are certain not to produce the desired effect, and refuses to use means, making roads, bridges, ports, and piers, which in a question of price are certain to produce the desired effect, therefore I say the Government is doing nothing really to promote the



cotton trade, but is continuing its experiments with the usual object of mystifying the public of this country, to divert attention from the mischief it has done to the cotton trade of India by leaving the ryots without the means of that commerce or exchange which is the instrument of production. And while the necessity of giving the cultivators means of transport has been urged on the Government for the last thirty years without effect, it is worth noticing, with particular reference to the cotton trade, some of the representations made by various parties during the present Charter, and first by the Asiatic Society.

One of the original objects of the Asiatic Society was to discover and develop the vegetable, mineral, and other resources of India; and the Society's "Agricultural Committee" had the advantage at starting of possessing a very active secretary, intent on progress, who procured sundry excellent papers for his Committee, describing the valuable products of the soil and the difficulty of turning them to account for want of roads. At this time, 1837, the Committee published Mr. Ashburner's letter on the carriage of cotton on bullocks' backs from Berar; a paper which for powers of graphic description has never been surpassed, and has inspired all succeeding writers and speakers on the subject. At the same period the Committee proclaimed that if the Government would only make roads, it might expect to see the export of cotton alone, to say nothing of other articles of commerce, swelling at the rate of 100,000 bales per annum, and probably soon amounting to a million of bales, while the effect on the salt trade was certain to be equally great. Unfortunately, this Agricultural Committee, which was beginning to know so much, and what was a still greater offence, to tell the public so much about India, alarmed the jealousy of a bureaucratic despotism, which determined to silence it at any price. The first thing was to find or make a good place for the secretary, and stop his mouth; and accordingly this votary of progress one morning took his colleagues by surprise (of whom one or two never spoke to him afterwards), by announcing his promotion to a Government appointment.

After this blow the Agricultural Committee withered away

under the frowns of Government, and the Asiatic Society found it expedient to confine itself to the most harmless antiquarian researches for the future. It is hardly necessary to add that as Government did not make the roads, the export of cotton did not swell at the rate of 100,000 bales per annum, as the Committee had anticipated; but, instead of this, the average export to England and China of the last seven years, as compared with that of the preceding seven years, has only increased 25,620 bales, and the average export from Berar has positively diminished!

This result is indeed grievous: this single fact is enough to show the consequences of neglecting public works in India. But I cannot help being rather amused to see the quondam secretary of the Agricultural Committee, now translated into the honourable Botanist of the Hon. Company, publish a book, on the eve of the Charter discussions, to inform us that "roads, *however bad*, can form no impediment to cotton cultivation in Western India, because the country is everywhere near rivers or the sea." Why, as it was said by a correspondent of the "Times," this must make the credulous reader shudder to think of the sums of money wasted on roads in this country, considering that we are almost everywhere nearer to rivers or the sea than they are in the country spoken of by Dr. Royle, with the extra advantage of having *our rivers navigable*. Yet we have in England and Wales 36 canals and 4000 miles of railway and 20,000 miles of paved streets and turnpike roads, and 95,000 miles of cross roads, against 72 miles of "real road," and 400 miles of unstoned and unbridged clay roads, in a much greater extent of Western India! However I think the credulous reader may take courage; I think if we broke up our roads, and obliged our farmers and manufacturers to transport their produce on pack-bullocks over "mere tracks" only passable a few months in the year, that we should not be better off than we are now; if the public thinks differently, it can easily petition the Legislature to destroy our roads, and place the population of these isles in the advantageous position of the Indoos!

And now that I have gone through the stock excuses of the

Bureaucracy, under the several heads of freight, residence, assessment, and experiments, I ask whether any of these furnish an answer to the following facts? In the year 1837 a memorial was sent home to Government from the merchants in Bombay, certifying that ruinous and intolerable expenses were entailed on every sort of commerce, specifically including the cotton trade, by the want of roads, bridges, &c. &c. This was backed by a strong appeal from the Governor, then Sir Robert Grant, and it is worth remarking that every eminent Governor of Bombay has tried his utmost to get something done for its communications. From the year 1837 to the present time similar complaints have been reiterated by the merchants, of which I need only remind the reader of two examples, the Trade Reports I have already quoted, and the memorial to the Governor-General in 1850, stating that many valuable articles were often left to perish on the fields, and others enhanced in price 200 per cent., owing to the miserably inadequate communications through the country. Again, in the year 1838, the home authorities, *i.e.* the President of the Board of Control, and the Court of Directors, distinctly admitted the necessity of making the roads, bridges, ports, and piers, prayed for by a deputation of cotton manufacturers from Manchester, and emphatically promised that they should forthwith be constructed. Finally, in the year 1848 the Cotton Committee of the House of Commons report that the witnesses, with scarcely an exception, "concur in describing the means of internal communication throughout India, as totally inadequate for the requirements of commerce." The Committee add, "produce from the interior being frequently transported hundreds of miles on the backs of bullocks, great damage thereby arises to merchandise, and particularly to cotton." Government, therefore, has long been aware that the great obstacle to the cotton trade of Western India, was the want of means of transport, and has long ago promised to remove that obstacle.

Now, then, I have before me a detailed report of the state of the roads throughout the Bombay Presidency in the year 1851. I shall not repeat the details, because a series of letters addressed to the "Times" in 1850-51, rather understating than over stating

the case, have already made the public familiar with the facts, therefore it will be sufficient for me to state generally the sum of this Report, which is as follows:—Except the road to Poonah, of 72 miles in length, still very imperfect in some respects, and constructed before the present Charter—except this, there have not been made up to the present time, twenty miles of stoned and bridged road in any part of the Bombay Presidency; there are no made roads in Guzerat; no piers or jetties at the cotton ports; not one good and complete line of communication with the interior all down the country from north to south; not one of the clay roads, the fair weather roads, which *do not deserve the name of roads*, according to Colonel Grant of the Bombay Engineers, not one of these even which is properly drained and bridged, and is not, as Captain Wingate says, “thoroughly execrable,” for a considerable part of its course; and in short, the Government has not fulfilled its promises to supply that want of roads, &c., which is, to its knowledge, the great obstacle to commerce in this Presidency; it has prevented speculators from doing so; it has left the natives without tolerable means of transport to this day; and the country will require the construction of about a thousand miles of “real road,” in Colonel Grant’s phrase, before the cotton trade of India can even be said to have had a chance of success!

I must remind the reader, that I promised to give this example of the cotton trade as an illustration, not a measure, of the injury inflicted on the natives by neglecting the communications of the country. Perhaps after all, the most lamentable instance of the effect of a want of roads is exhibited in the periodical local famines to which the Government leaves the people exposed, and by which, as Mr. Chapman says, the agricultural population are so totally ruined and thrown into the hands of the money-lenders that they have, roughly speaking, to begin the world afresh every ten or twelve years. Let the reader imagine one of these cases cited to the Committee of 1848, when grain was selling at 6s. to 8s. a quarter in Candeish, and 64s. to 70s. in Poonah, where the people were dying in the streets of famine, without the possibility of getting supplies from Candeish, because the clay roads are

impracticable in the rains : and let the reader remember that the same famine might happen again next year !

. . . . . "Oh we have ta'en  
Too little care of this ! take physie, pomp ;  
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel."

I often hear people talk of the liberality of the Court of Directors ; and many instances of this liberality to their servants and friends, and relations or connections, have come to my knowledge : a liberality visible in hard cash, and paid for with the ryot's money. But I confess I should like to see some exercise of this liberality to save these poor people dying of famines. What with over-assessing them, and destroying their aristocracy, merchants, and manufacturers, we have reduced them to a low ebb ; and the liberality of the Court of Directors would be well employed in saving them from local famines. Before the passing of the last Charter, the Court of Directors were accused of regularly securing the vote and interest of one or two powerful politicians by their "liberality," to prepare for the Charter discussion. I know not how far the late Governor-General of India may have been the unconscious object of a manoeuvre of this sort, but when I saw a pension of 5000*l.* a-year for life so readily granted to him, for having been present at a battle where he was not Commander-in-Chief, while the destitution of the poor ryots who supply the means of this liberality, excites no corresponding sympathy, I fear such a system will end fatally. It reminds me of the prodigality of the French Court, in spite of the distress of the people, before the great revolution in France ; and when I hear in society of "the liberality of the Court of Directors," I remember the famous phrase "*la Reine est si bonne !*" What a comment on their liberality are these local famines, to which so many of the former aristocracy of the country fall victims. Conceive one father of a family, who "was rich and well to do when we came into the province, but has now scarcely clothes to his back," with his crying children round him—perhaps, reader, of an age and form so like your own—perishing of a local famine ! Conceive the stony gaze on vacancy, the tearless, terrible despair

of that man, when he feels that the children must die; and thinks of the government of the stranger that has done this! Conceive his boys suppressing their torments to spare their father's heart, and his witnessing the death-struggle of all the beings he has loved, one after another, before he is killed by starvation himself! Would I could believe that Providence holds us guiltless of these things, and that we may allow a Bureaucracy to misgovern India with impunity! But I cannot think it—I am speaking of no imaginary inhabitants of another planet, but of our native fellow-subjects, whose affections we might so easily win, and whom, nevertheless, we treat with a degree of barbarous, unfeeling neglect, which we should be ashamed of showing to our domestic animals.

Yet Bombay is not the only Presidency where the Government thinks it sufficient to give up a one hundredth, or some years a two-hundredth part of the revenue to "public works;" an item which includes a variety of civil buildings, and improvements in the immediate neighbourhood of European stations, *of no service whatever to the commerce of the interior*. I will now cite the case of Madras, and then of Bengal and Agra, to show that every part of our old territory is suffering from this criminal neglect of the communications—criminal, because so deeply injurious to the natives; so great a dereliction of our duty towards them; and so evidently the cause of financial embarrassment in India, and the consequent peril of England.

The system pursued with regard to public works in Madras is clearly explained in an article of the "Calcutta Review," for December, 1851. The writer shows that while a large part of the Madras revenue is derived from irrigated lands, the constant outlay necessary to keep such works of irrigation in repair was originally provided for under the native princes, by a special assessment distinct from the land revenue, called "tank fees." He shows that these repairs being as much an essential condition of receiving the revenue as the ryot's expenses of cultivation, it is no more reasonable to have absorbed this special assessment into the land revenue, and to put down these repairs as expenditure from revenue on public works, than it would be to put down the

ryot's gross produce as revenue, and call his expenses for seed, manure, labour, &c., expenditure out of revenue. He also shows that such works, which are never undertaken except as a pecuniary speculation, certain to return an usurious interest for the money expended of from thirty to fifty per cent.—that such works are not to be placed in the same category as public works, like roads and bridges, which benefit the public without being of the same direct advantage to their authors; particularly because such works of irrigation do not diminish but rather increase the necessity for roads, while at the same time they create an abundant capital for their formation. The writer therefore excludes from the table of nine years' expenditure on public works, published by one of the Directors, the expenses of irrigation works, and proves that on all the rest, roads, bridges, ports, piers, ferries, canals, embankments, &c. &c., there has only been expended about the half of one per cent. of the revenue annually, during the said term of nine years. He then notices the results of thus starving the most indispensable public works of the Presidency, and I will quote one of his examples in his own words:

“The Cuddapah Collectorate is a large district measuring 13,000 square miles, nearly twice the size of the whole of Wales. A large part of the surface of this district is cotton soil, very productive, but the worst of all materials for roads: other parts are wild and mountainous. It does not appear that any considerable outlay has ever been made on the roads of this extensive tract during the last half century that it has been under British rule, though, during that period, fully fourteen millions sterling have been drawn from it in direct revenue. The consequences may be supposed. Roads cannot be said to exist; in the cotton soil a little rain makes the tracks impassable, and everywhere carts, when used at all, are only able to carry half the load, and to travel half the distance in a day, that they could on a made road. Nor is this all: the road from this extensive district to the Presidency is in no better state. It is, in short, proverbially bad, even among Madras roads, and there is one part of it which is literally used by the Military Board as a trial ground to test the powers of new gun carriages, which are pronounced safe if they pass this severe

ordeal! Cuddapah is a rich and productive tract; its indigo is celebrated, and it is one of the finest cotton-fields in South India, but it is needless to say that its prosperity is dreadfully impeded and kept down by the disgraceful state of its internal roads, and of its communication with the natural outlet for its produce."

The writer adds, that the zealous and active are impatient and indignant to see the enterprise and industry of the natives repressed by the wretched and disgraceful intercommunications of the country; but he says that the Madras authorities, from the Governor down to the collectors and engineers, are most unwilling to propose any improvement to the Supreme Government (which is forced to obey orders from a Bureaucracy at home), because such proposals are always received with disfavour, and almost always refused; and this has since been confirmed by the evidence of Lord Elphinstone, late Governor of Madras, before the Committee of last session. The writer gives an instance of such a refusal, which shows the spirit of bureaucratic administration: "Colonel Arthur Cotton, that able and zealous engineer officer, was very anxious that the noble means of inland water communication, afforded by the Godavery River, should be no longer neglected; and having satisfied himself by local inquiries that there was reasonable ground for believing that the river might be navigated by steam for nearly 400 miles from the sea, and into the very heart of the valley of Berar, the finest cotton country in India, he applied to the Madras Government for a small grant of money to enable him personally to explore the river in a small steamer, which he had himself constructed for the Godavery Anicut, and to clear away slight impediments. The Madras Government solicited the sanction of the Indian Government to devote a sum not exceeding 1000*l.* to that very important object, but this application was refused." The object was to open an inland navigation 400 miles in length, and thus to effect a communication between a vast cotton-field and the Manchester manufacturers, and to give the grain-producing districts in the delta of the Godavery access to the vast markets for food which would be created by the extended culture of cotton in Berar. I have before me a letter from a Madras engineer on this subject,



in which he says that "*cheap carriage is the grand desideratum for India,*" and that "the navigation of the Godavery would open up a vast field for commercial enterprise, that whole tract having been almost hermetically sealed hitherto." He adds, that "for Berar cotton to be conveyed 300 miles by land to Bombay, when it can be brought down at one-tenth of that expense by the river, to a safe port on this side, in a few days, is a disgrace to Englishmen." The letter concludes by saying that "*nothing but the continual pressure of public opinion in England* will ensure anything being effected in India." I hope this public opinion will not be appealed to in vain!

I will give one more example from the Government Blue Book of 1851, to show the contrast between the situation of the people in a well-managed native state and that of the inhabitants of one of our Madras districts which suffered the longest from over-assessment:—"The roads in this district (of Bellary) are in a wretched state. Excellent roads, feasible not only for the common country carts, but for spring carriages, have been made in many directions throughout the Mysore country, which borders for a distance of about 200 miles on the south boundary of Bellary, but there are *no corresponding roads to meet them* in that district, and consequently not only the town of Bellary, but the whole district is cut off from the advantages which are offered by an open and easy communication with the Mysore territories." However, an excuse is given for starving the public works of Madras, which is characteristic of a Bureaucracy, viz., that the Presidency does not pay its expenses. On this plea it has been the constant practice to press retrenchment and economy on this unfortunate Presidency, and to refuse it the means of improvement. On this plea the transit duties were retained, and other most injurious taxes are still retained. On this plea the Madras Collector has an amount of work thrown upon him, from the size of the districts, which it is physically impossible for him to perform, so that he is compelled to neglect parts of it. On this plea no revenue survey is granted to Madras, although in every district of the Presidency either no survey has ever been made, or it is known to have been hastily and carelessly done, and extensively tampered with afterwards; and it is

admitted that an accurate survey is the only possible basis of an equitable assessment, particularly with the minute holdings under the Ryotwar system. And after all, the reviewer proves that this excuse of the Presidency's not paying its expenses is only supported by a juggle in the accounts, by which Madras is charged with the military expenditure for countries whose revenues are paid to Bengal. The same excuse is made for starving the public works of Bombay, and supported in the same way, by "cooking" the accounts, and debiting this Presidency with many heavy expenses, which have nothing on earth to do with it. And it is by such contemptible tricks as this that the Bureaucracy defend their destructive policy towards the population of these two Presidencies; they begin by destroying the commerce and prosperity of the natives on a false plea of their not paying their expenses, and then, as if to add insult to injury, they point to their pauperised condition as a ground for refusing every improvement that would enable them to pay a higher revenue!

But let us go deeper into this; not only because the excuse of a Presidency's not paying its expenses is the strongest possible admission of the misgovernment of that Presidency, but because this excuse is, in fact, applied to the whole of India; and when the Bureaucracy say they have not money for public works and other reforms in India, they do but say in other words that India does not pay its expenses. I will therefore quote an extract on this point from the letter of a Madras engineer; a letter hastily written, and not meant for publication, but which I like all the better for it. I think the writer's natural expression, coming from the heart, will go to the heart, more than any deliberate statement would do; but the reader shall judge for himself: here is the extract:—"Lord \* \* \* speaks of the Court not having been able to provide money for public works, while they were struggling for existence in India, although they could for wars which they were compelled to carry on at all risks. But this begs the whole question, which is, were they, by neglecting the public works, enabled to carry on their wars, or were they so miserably poor and swamped in their means because they neglected the public works? They are two very different things, the carrying on new

and extensive improvements, and the keeping old works in repair. We will first take up the latter. To say they could not find money for *them* is nonsense. The works themselves provided money from year to year, and if the repairs were not executed the works did not yield their proper returns. Now, Tanjore was the only district in this Presidency where the works were kept in thorough repair. To give you some idea of the extent to which this neglect was carried, the large irrigation works in this district were never cleared out for thirty or forty years, by which an entire district was half ruined. My predecessor cleared out one mile at a cost of 700*l.*, and the revenue of the Talook (county) rose immediately from 7000*l.* to 10,000*l.* Probably 50*l.* a-year would have kept the channels clear, and for want of this, 3000*l.* or 4000*l.* a-year were lost. This has been the state of things. In 1827, I found a channel that entered two Talooks filled up six feet, so that when it ought to have had eight feet of water in it, it had only two. The revenue had fallen from three or four lacs to one lac: when it was cleared out, the revenue rose in two or three years about one and a half lac of rupees. One or two thousand rupees would have kept this clear. Thousands of works are at this moment out of repair, the repairs of which would not have cost one year's increase of revenue, though they have been neglected so many years. This has been the state of things: what nonsense is it to talk of their not being able to find money. But their own acts answer the question. All buildings are kept in repair. How could they find money for this? And how did they find money for Tanjore? About 4000*l.* a-year were spent in keeping up the works. Where did the money come from? Of course, from the district itself. If they had not spent the 4000*l.* they would have lost 20,000*l.* or 30,000*l.*; but farther, they spent steadily in Tanjore about 4000*l.* in improvements, by which, on an average, they just about obtained a permanent increase of revenue of 4000*l.* Thus no outlay at all was required for keeping these works in repair, nor even for a constant course of improvement. *Why should not this have been done in every district?* The fact is, that the Company were without money for their wars, because they

neglected to keep in repair the old works upon which the revenue depended. But they might and ought to have gone much further than this; for without a very large expenditure at once, a system of improvement might have been kept up, as in Tanjore, that would have steadily yielded from fifty to a hundred per cent. To confound such a proceeding with the outlay of a vast capital, which, after a few years, will return five per cent., and then say the Company could not spend money for public works, is merely throwing dust in their own and other people's eyes. But this is not the strongest point of the case. They did not take the least pains to prevent famine. To say nothing of the death of a quarter of a million of people in Guntoor, the Public Works Committee, in their Report, calculate that the loss in money by the Guntoor famine was more than two millions sterling. If they could find money to supply these losses they could have found a hundredth part of the sum to prevent them. But now with respect to works of actual improvement of considerable extent. These works have much more than paid their own way; not a rupee has been taken from the general treasury; but on the contrary seven lacs paid into it. A schedule of various new works executed of late years has just been printed, the average return from which has been fifty per cent., *counting from the first execution* of the works, though of course in the first year or two their full effects were not developed, and this in direct revenue. Of course the indirect revenues are increased also; and the increase of private property far exceeds that gained by Government. But just look at this case, the saleable value of land in Tanjore has increased much more than a million sterling since the Anicuts were built—the land is now saleable at about £5 an acre. The land in this delta has as yet been unsaleable; it is much richer than that of Tanjore, much better supplied with water by its river, and has a fine safe port, so that when our works are in full operation, and the population has filled up, which it will do with great rapidity, the lands ought to be worth at least £6 an acre, or seven millions sterling for the whole irrigated tract: this will give you some idea of what public works are here. Let us take another case, viz. transit. On the western

road from Madras, say for sixty miles before the roads divide, there is now a traffic of about 500 tons a day, I believe 180,000 a year; it costs 3000*l.* a mile, or about 180,000*l.* a year. This might be carried on a canal for 10,000*l.*; here are 170,000*l.* a year lost in sixty miles of transit, and *this is going on throughout the Presidency!* Is it surprising that on such a system of managing the country, the people are poor, and the Government poor; how could it be otherwise? I am certain that if 500,000*l.* a year had been spent in public works here, there would have been all along an immense additional increase of revenue, and the country would by this time have been a complete contrast to what it now is. Lord \* \* \* thinks it would be better not to blame the Government; how can we possibly point out how improvement can be made without proving that there has been neglect before? If such immense sums can be obtained, there must have been some stupid, merciless system before." (Remember that, reader! that phrase is written by one of the most distinguished men in India.) "What inconceivable folly it is to shut our eyes to facts, and not to take advantage of discovery, because if we do, it would imply that those who went before us committed blunders. The discovery of gold in California and Sydney proves strange blindness in those who had been living so many years in those localities, but that does not prevent men digging it up now. The mine which exists in this country will bear competition with those gold discoveries. An expenditure of 30,000*l.* or 40,000*l.* in Tanjore, besides the enormous increase in direct revenue, has added much more than a million sterling to the property of the province. If a man who could earn 30*l.* a year in other ways, went to the diggings; and there obtained gold to the value of 900*l.* a year, the world would ring with it—yet it would not equal the profits in Tanjore; and here they promise very far to exceed that. Lord \* \* \* wonders at my vehemence about public works; is he really so humble a man as to think no better of himself than to suppose he could stand unmoved in a district where 250,000 people had perished miserably of famine, through the neglect of our Government, and see it exposed every year to

a similar occurrence?" (Remember that, reader!) "If his Lordship had been living in the midst of the district at the time, like one of our civilians, and had had every morning to clear the neighbourhood of his house of hundreds of dead bodies of poor creatures who had struggled to get near the European in hopes that there perhaps they might find food, he would have realised things beyond what he has seen in his \* \* \* shire park."

I think the above letter requires no comments of mine; therefore I will now pass on to the provinces of Bengal and Agra. These provinces enjoy some real and some apparent advantages which we must reduce to their true value in order to estimate the degree in which the Government has fulfilled its duty towards them. Their first and real advantage is in their navigable rivers, which form a great natural highway to the interior of northern India, and permit the residence of Europeans on the line of the Ganges, &c., because the river navigation affords our indigo planters and sugar manufacturers a means of transit and communication which is not available to residents in Bombay and Madras. Their second advantage is that in the settlement of the north-west provinces a sum of one per cent. on the land revenue was set apart for the improvement of the district roads, independent of the Government expenditure on the trunk lines; and in the perpetual settlement of Bengal, the Zemindars were bound, it was allowed for in their rent, to keep in repair the roads on their respective properties. This advantage in the case of Agra is no doubt real; under the efficient Government of Agra, assisted by native management and co-operation, this fund and other local funds are turned to the utmost account in improving the means of transit; but in the case of Bengal the advantage is rather apparent than real, because the Government does not enforce the obligation of the Zemindars who neglect their duty. The last apparent advantage of these provinces is in the fund arising from the surplus of ferry and river tolls, which is by law destined to the improvement of the local communications. But I have shown that up to this time the fund in question has been appropriated to the general Treasury in Madras, contrary to the law; and in Bengal, according to the "Friend of India" for July 31, 1851,

an accumulation of ferry tolls amounting to 80,000*l.* was at one swoop so appropriated, contrary to the law; and according to the same journal for August 28, 1851, an amount of river tolls has been so appropriated in Bengal, between the years 1824 and 1850, equal to 373,500*l.*, contrary to the law; and according to the same journal for April 22, 1852, these river tolls, which are, it says, “a heavy burthen on the commerce of the country,” and are levied nominally to facilitate the navigation of the rivers, are still so appropriated, in direct violation of the law—therefore the advantage of the above fund is apparent and not real.

But now, after enumerating these advantages, I must explain that they do not satisfy the pressing wants of the people. The reader has only to glance at the map of these immense territories to see that the existence of a few navigable rivers does not dispense with the necessity of constructing roads, bridges, &c. &c., all over the country, to give the natives facility of transit for their commerce. I will therefore give some evidence of the extent to which the Government has neglected its duty towards them. Mr. Bird, late Governor of Agra, told the House of Commons Committee last session, “the observation of travellers through Agra and Bengal, would be,—how very little has been done by the Government of India for the improvement of the country.” This is exactly the style in which Shore spoke twenty years ago. Again, the “Friend of India,” of April 24, 1851, says: “One of the most serious charges brought against the administration of the Company in India, has always been the neglect of all public works, and the disadvantageous contrast which it exhibits, not only to the civilised Governments of Europe and America, but also to its less enlightened predecessors the Mahommedans. It is impossible for any man to travel through the two provinces of Bengal and Behar, which have been longest in our possession, and which have yielded the largest amount of revenue, without a painful feeling that the charge is not without foundation. The appearance they present after more than ninety years of occupancy; is that of *the neglected estate of a spendthrift landlord*. For one good road which we have constructed, we have *allowed twenty others to disappear*. We have erected one magnificent city, and

every other city of note has been allowed to go to ruin. With the exception of the trunk-road, and the public edifices in Calcutta, there is nothing throughout these provinces, to show that they have been for nearly a century under the Government of the same people who have rendered their own country a theatre of wonders." In June, 1851, speaking of the above trunk-road, the "Friend" says, "we have but one road in Bengal." In March of the same year, 1851, the "Asiatic and Colonial Register," says, "that in Bengal the public officers are obliged to travel in palanquins owing to the impassable state of the district roads, and the want of bridges, and take twice the time they need do if they could use horses and carriages." In July, 1851, the "Friend" says, alluding to a new Toll Act, "But where are the roads in Bengal? we have but two which deserve the name: the grand trunk-road to Benares and the road to Jugonauth, which is said to be a good one." The "Friend" had previously published in April, 1851, a description of the above "trunk-road," by an Agra traveller, stating that in many places there was no metalling (stone) at all, and the carriage had to creep along at the rate of about two miles an hour; and there were three miles of heavy sand at the Soane, requiring four pairs of bullocks to drag the carriage through; that the ferry was equally bad and caused great delay; and that most of the metalling was brickdust or inferior stone, which made a difference of two or three miles an hour in the rate of palanquin bearers, as compared with a first-class Agra road. Again, in July, 1852, the "Friend" inserts the following paragraph respecting this "trunk-road:"—"The 'Delhi Gazette' warns intending travellers against attempting the road between Calcutta and Benares, at the present season. A passenger by the Transit Company's carriages was recently thirteen days on the road, and was compelled to walk for nearly sixty miles, as the mud was too deep for the carriage to move. Another gentleman was obliged to return to Benares after having reached the Kurumnassa, having discovered that about six feet of loose earth had been heaped upon the road in order to raise its level. Near Calcutta, the road is in a similar condition." Are such things possible! Bengal and Behar, with but one good road, and "intending travellers



warned" that they will have to walk sixty miles upon it, because carriages stick in the mud!

It is difficult to help smiling at such a climax, yet we must recollect that this system of administration is no laughing matter for the unfortunate natives; it is death to them. However, I have now before me a Report printed last year by order of the House of Commons of the public works executed in India during a period of ten years. The details of these works are only given for Bengal and Agra (the others would have been a still worse exposure, and therefore they are not given, although specifically ordered by the House of Commons), but these occupy the first 145 pages of the Report. I have given in Appendix A an abstract of this expenditure in Bengal and Agra, prepared by a careful analysis of the above details, and will now notice its result, prefacing this notice by a few remarks on two of the items, viz., works of irrigation and embankments. The first, as I have shown in the case of Madras, literally pay their way as they go, and always yield an usurious interest, and are therefore not to be placed in the same category as works like roads, bridges, canals, &c., which directly benefit the people, and only indirectly the revenue. Of the second, I must remind the reader that, not only is the Government constrained to keep up those embankments by its own engagements at the time of the Perpetual Settlement, but the Government would lose its revenue if it allowed the country to be inundated; and the expense of maintaining the embankments stands on exactly the same ground as the "tank fees" in Madras, it is just as much an essential condition of receiving the revenue as the ryot's expense of cultivation, and it ought no more to have been absorbed into the revenue, and then called expenditure out of revenue on public works, than the ryot's gross produce ought to be put down as revenue, and his expenses called expenditure out of revenue. It appears then by the abstract in Appendix A, that of the gross revenue or whole amount of taxes levied on the people of Bengal and Agra, the average annual expenditure for ten years, on roads and bridges, has been less than three-quarters of one per cent.; that is, less than 110,219*l.* for two provinces larger than England

and France put together, and containing a larger population than that of these two kingdoms; and the expenditure on works of irrigation and embankments during the same period has been much less than a half of one per cent. Now could anything I said be a stronger proof of the cruel and criminal neglect of the people than these simple facts from the Government's own Blue Book? Could anything illustrate more forcibly "the stupid and merciless system" of a Bureaucracy? "Is it surprising," in the words of the "Madras Engineer," "that under such a system of managing the country, the people are poor, and the Government poor? how could it be otherwise?" But when we entrust the Government of India to a class of politicians, of whom Burke said most truly, that "a large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of States passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it for the wanderings of a disordered imagination;" is it not to be expected that they should govern exactly as they have done? Is it not natural that such a class should think it the highest art of finance, to do what would be considered absurd in any other civilised country, to raise nearly the whole of the net revenue by direct taxation on produce, and to grasp direct revenue as much as they could, and wherever they could reach it, without an idea beyond this? And of course this drain of direct revenue has fallen upon and ruined every class in their turn—the country gentlemen and farmers have felt it in over-assessment—the merchants and manufacturers, and inland towns felt it in the transit duties. Mr. Trevelyan says that many towns were deserted by the trade and manufactures carried on within their walls, and the inhabitants left as paupers who had previously been industrious workmen; and Shore mentions the failure of between fifty and sixty bankers and wholesale merchants in his experience in one city alone; and this went on throughout the country. At present the only class who can yield any more direct revenue are the native princes and the territorial aristocracy, and accordingly the drain is falling upon them, as I show in my next chapter. Of course this system has pauperised the country, for it would pauperise any country: it is cutting down the tree to get at its fruits. Yet it is still the sole resource of the

Bureaucracy. The only hope expressed in the last despatch of raising the surplus revenue of the Punjab from eighteen lacs to thirty, is by reducing the expenditure of public works in the Punjab to the same extent. And so they go on; the only plan for the future is the plan of the past, viz., to drain everything in and lay nothing out, and this hopeful system has at length brought our Indian finances to the very edge of ruin. In a letter dated this year from one of the most celebrated and experienced engineers in India, he says: "I reckon that India now pays for want of cheap transit a sum equal to the whole of the taxes, so that by reducing its cost to a tenth, which might easily be done, we should as good as abolish all taxes." I have no doubt this opinion is literally true, but it is in vain to repeat such truths to such a home Government! It is in vain to tell them that the want of public works keeps India poor; that the want of communication deprives the natives of the possibility of commerce or exchange to an incalculable extent; that it forbids progress; it paralyses industry; it stops the division of labour; it neutralises God's blessings on the soil; and tends to keep the inhabitants barbarians and paupers. It is in vain to tell them that the elevation of the human species follows the track of every great highway we lead into the interior of India. All this passes with a Bureaucracy for romance: "littleness in object and in means, to them appears soundness and sobriety."

In conclusion, I shall not surprise the reader by saying that I have not the slightest confidence in what the "Friend of India" sneeringly calls, "the new vigour of the Government in sight of the Charter discussions." I believe the "new vigour" exactly corresponds to the new responsibility which called it forth, and will only last as long as the cause which produced it. As soon as the Parliamentary responsibility is again comfortably shelved for another twenty years, the new vigour will disappear with it. But I must discriminate here between works undertaken by the "new vigour" for the English and for the natives. The Government has recently sanctioned three railways and an electric telegraph. Now I have no doubt the latter will be finished, and that speedily, because, independent of the calculation that the users of it will

pay its expenses, every man can understand the immense additional strength which the telegraph will give us in India, and our English interest in the matter is so clear to English politicians, that even a bureaucratic Administration would not dare to trifle with it. But it is very different in the case of railways. Unfortunately English politicians do not see our English interest in Indian public works, nor feel the ryot's strong necessity for them. There is nothing therefore to insure the railways being finished, or the want of other communications being supplied—(for two or three railways will not suffice for the wants of India, any more than it would do for England to have a railway from Liverpool to Birmingham, and another from London to Southampton, and no roads beside.)<sup>\*</sup> It appears that the shareholders in Indian railways take the matter very easily as long as they regularly receive their dividends on the money paid up; and as these dividends come out of the pockets of the ryots, who have no voice in the matter, and literally go for nothing in the decision, if once the Charter is settled, and the present bureaucratic Government safe again for another twenty years, there may be money enough spent in dividends on railways always making and never made, to have paid for good roads all over India. In fact, the system will be pursued with railways which has been pursued with other ways; and I must explain to the reader that the published "sanction" for any work in India, is frequently a pure mystification, and does not in the least mean that the work will be made, unless it suits the Government to spend the money.

The Government has various modes of privately stopping the execution of a work that is publicly "sanctioned." One is to write confidentially to the local authorities that the expenditure is "in the present state of the finances, inadvisable." Another is to require further explanation, and so hang up the work just as many years as the Government pleases, pending interminable references to England: the announcement of a reference to England, says Mr. Campbell, "is often regarded as an indefinite postponement." A third mode is to take care in sanctioning a work, that it shall be impossible to execute it, by keeping the

district without engineers. And here I must digress for a moment to remark that in every Presidency in India, the corps of engineers is utterly inadequate to the exigencies of the country, not merely too few to execute new works, but even to keep in repair the old ones.

The "Friend of India" of February 6th, 1851, after making exactly the same complaint as Shore did twenty years before, that infantry officers, magistrates, and collectors, were constantly called upon to perform the functions of civil engineers, mentions a case where a wealthy native had subscribed a large sum for rebuilding a bridge, when it fell some years before, and yet, though ample funds were provided for the work, the bridge had not been rebuilt, and the country had been deprived of the benefit of it, because no engineer could be spared to make it. I repeat, therefore, that the "new vigour" and the public "sanction" of railways, or any other works, gives me no confidence whatever in the Government. I am convinced that the same men, in the same places, will, if they can, pursue the same system in the future as in the past. I have seen that the promises which necessity forces the Indian Government to make, necessity alone will force it to keep.

As I have explained elsewhere the remedies which I propose for these grievances, I will not go over the same ground here, except to notice one point. I may be asked, what, if the Bureaucracy is cut down, and power and responsibility given to the local authorities, what is to insure their competency to direct the local administration? for instance, such a Presidency might be named where the only business the Governor is fit for, is to travel about and take care of his health; while his Council are men who have risen by seniority alone, and are remarkable, not for ability, but for the want of it; and supposing five per cent. of the land revenues were allotted to public works in this Presidency, what is to insure the money being well laid out? I answer that if the worst comes to the worst, the local authorities are always more competent than the home authorities; but there is never any reason for having an incompetent local administration, except the private interest of the Bureaucracy. It is always easy enough to make

the local government efficient if there is the will to do it. It is perfectly easy to break through the rule of seniority for the higher appointments, as recommended in Mr. Willoughby's evidence. The only difficulty is that it is not the interest of the "intelligent clerks" to do this, for the more inefficient a local government can be made, the greater is the power of the Bureaucracy at home. And it is because I have invariably found, in studying the details of local administration, that all the reforms required in India would be a necessary consequence of the reform at home, that I have struck at the root of the evil, and devoted this book to advocating a change in the Bureaucratic system at home.

Meanwhile, as the case now stands, the Indian Government are imposing a heavy tribute on the ryots, and refusing them the public works which would enable them to bear the burthen—they are forcing them to make bricks without straw. And so completely does the system of secrecy and the system of mystification keep the English public ignorant of and indifferent to these things, that India might as well contain nothing but cattle besides our functionaries there, for all that its population is talked of or thought of by the majority of my countrymen. Even in the reports of the dinners given by the East India Company to officials going to or returning from the country, the reader will be surprised and perhaps shocked, to find that amid the chorus of praises bestowed on the East India services, and the mutual compliments of Directors and Members of Parliament on the great success of Indian administration, and the great men formed by it, amid all the self-laudation and congratulation, scarcely a word, and sometimes not a word, is said about the natives. And thus it is that every Indian grievance is "out of sight out of mind," and the compliments go on in England, and the complaints in India, from generation to generation.

I have often wondered how it is that those who are so conspicuously active among us in the interests of religion, never turn their attention to India. How is it they never inquire whether, as a nation, we are doing our duty to India? and whether their zeal could not obtain for its vast population that legislative justice which would confer the most solid blessings on a

one-eighth part of the whole human family ? It seems to me that Christian charity would not be unworthily employed in such a work as this.

However, I know not if my feeble voice can reach my countrymen, but if it can, I tell them plainly that the bureaucratic Government to which they have entrusted the irresponsible despotism of India, has not secured the happiness of the natives in their person, honour, property, or moral sentiments. It has not acted on what ought to be the principle of every Government, viz., to serve the people, and root the sovereign in their interests and affections. Instead of this, it has acted on a system of distrust, and exclusion, and exhaustion, like that of a bad tenant who feels that his lease will soon expire, and scourges the land to get all he can off his farm before he is forced to quit.

And at length the consequence of a policy which has hitherto only been fatal to the millions of our fellow-subjects in India are coming home to our own door. The public have no idea of the imminence of the danger. It has always been officially asserted that peace would soon return, and the finances would suffice for a time of peace, though they could not defray the charges of war. Even had this last assertion been true, those who are acquainted with the private motives which influence our policy on this subject, and acquainted with the tone of the public press on both sides of India, these know that too many of the servants of the state have an interest in going to war, for this promissory note of peace drawn by an irresponsible Government to be any solid security for the future. And at this very time, although the public have been most unjustifiably kept without official information of the causes of the present Burmese war, which will add its quota of millions to the debt of India, my private intelligence leaves me not a shadow of doubt that there was no more necessity for our going to war with the Burmese than for our going to war annually with the Americans.

But while it is not true, that the finances would suffice for a period of peace without an illicit revenue which is in the nature of a gambling speculation, I refer the reader to a statement given at Appendix B of this book, showing that the permanent

sources of Indian revenue, which are at present unequal to the charge of the debt, exhibit no increase corresponding to the progress of the debt, but in the case of the Customs' duties, a decline in the tax-paying power of the people; while on the other hand the regular increase of the debt under the present system of Government is inevitable, and it has only been met hitherto by a gambling resource. In fact, we are staking the credit and apparently the existence of our Indian empire on such a precarious source of revenue as opium-smuggling, although, according to the last "Friend of India" (Nov. 25th, 1852) the Chinese cabinet must soon *be forced by the necessity of circumstances* to change their policy of prohibiting the use of this drug, which, according to the same authority, will annihilate a financial resource amounting to one-fifth of the gross revenues of the British empire in India!

Now I cannot tell how this financial prospect will affect others, for there are those who will not believe in the reality of an earthquake until they are buried under its ruins, but I feel bound to say what it signifies to me as plain as figures can speak. It signifies that we are going on, the blind leading the blind, to a hideous gulf of bankruptcy in India. It means that we are allowing a Bureaucracy to steer the vessel of State to certain shipwreck. And when I think of "the creatures of the desk and the creatures of favour" who are doing this—when I remember what Burke says of them\*—I begin to fear lest the old proverb should come true in India, that "Providence raises up great men to found an empire, but employs the lowest of our species to destroy one."

\* "The tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species."



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE POLITICAL SYSTEM.

It is a common saying, and has grown into an article of popular faith, that, "after all, India is much better governed than the colonies,"—and I have heard so much from my youth upward of mal-administration in the colonies, that I had always taken the above proposition for granted, and supposed it to be a truism which admitted of no dispute. When however, after investigating the details of Indian administration, the old saying again accidentally strikes my ear, I am suddenly astonished to find so little foundation for it, that I am puzzled to conceive how such a mistake could have arisen.

After pondering over this phenomenon, I believe the real explanation of it to be that every grievance of the colonies finds loud and eloquent utterance in England, and even within the walls of Parliament; whereas the grievances of India have no voice among us; and the absence of complaint from the latter country is taken to signify the absence of grounds for complaint. This is a sufficiently curious illusion, for if the degree of complaint were evidence of the degree of mal-administration, then England would be about the worst governed country in the world, and incomparably worse governed than the Papal States; for no complaints are audible from the Roman territory, whatever men are suffering there: the smoke of the sacrifice rises dumbly.

But because there is in England, in one year, a thousand times more complaint of the Government than is heard from India during the lapse of a twenty years' Charter, let not the reader too hastily conclude that men do not suffer in India. It is a great mistake, says Sismondi, in speaking of the modern history

of Italy, it is a great mistake to suppose that the times about which history is silent are the least calamitous to mankind. All calamities are not historical; they require a certain dignity, a certain evident connection with politics and individuals, in which all the world can see the chain of causes and effects, before they attract sufficient notice to be recorded in history. But calamities may afflict a nation, not the less real because from their social nature silent, by which a whole people may feel themselves, as men more than as citizens, degraded, demoralised, disgraced in their own eyes, ruined in their fortunes, and deprived of hope so long as to lose the power of voluntary effort; and all this without the connection between politics and their condition being evident to the world, or any dramatic effect of public interest attracting notice to their inward bleeding wounds.

I shall endeavour to show the reader that this has been the case in India, notwithstanding the absence of complaint, but I look in vain for anything like this in the colonies. The Crown has never inflicted on the colonies such a Ryotwar system, or perpetual settlement, or judicial system, or such transit dues, as we have forced upon India; and there are perhaps worse calamities behind. I do not mean to deny that grievances exist in the colonies, only they are not equal to those of India, and they receive a very different degree of attention in England.

For instance, I will take the greatest colonial complaint of the day, the transportation of convicts. No doubt this evil is real enough, but I must observe that it is a thing of yesterday compared to many Indian griefs, and that the system of transportation has in its time been of essential service to the colonies, and even now it appears, by the "Globe" of November the 2nd, that a portion of the colonists petition for its continuance, as the only mode of supplying the labour market; at any rate the system is old, and the opposition to it comparatively new, and yet from the time that the colonists declare strongly against it they find men of first-rate abilities to urge their complaint; the Press—no part of which is gagged as in the case of India, by the threat of withdrawing the large income yielded by the Leadenhall Street advertisements—the Press warmly espouses their cause, and every

unprejudiced man would admit that their representative in the House of Commons, Sir William Molesworth,\* is listened to with the utmost respect by the House and the country—that he is virtually a much higher authority on the subject than any official man—and that from the date of his speech on the 21st of May, 1852, the system of transportation was certainly doomed, and the only question was, how much more odium and disgrace the Colonial Office would incur in a hopeless resistance to its inevitable abandonment.

How different is the case of the natives of India! Out of the House the public appears to be indifferent to their fate; and in the House the great authority on the subject is sure to be some official man who may be said to hold a general retainer to oppose the interest of the natives on every occasion, because his own position and influence depend on his maintaining that vicious system of Indian administration which requires his “sharp practice” to defend it, whereas a good system would employ an advocate of a higher character.

I may be referred to the efforts of Mr. Bright in 1848 and 1850, and of Lord Jocelyn in 1851, to show that the natives are not altogether abandoned in the House of Commons. I must answer that the Ministry would have refused Mr. Bright his Committee in 1848, but for the powerful interference of Sir Robert Peel. Alas for India! that great man was beginning to feel an unusual interest in Indian affairs at the time of his death, and, had his life been spared, the prospects of the natives would have been very different from what they are now. Would that his political friends had inherited his feelings on the subject! However, in 1850, Mr. Bright was cheaply defeated by an official denial of several notorious facts; and if Lord Jocelyn fared better last session, it was because a mass of new evidence, backed by official reports of which the substance had transpired, and by the public conviction and degradation of Ali Moorad, had rendered it impossible for the Home Government any longer to burk the case, as they did burk it for years in the Court of Proprietors.—*Vide* Appendix C.

\* This was written in 1852.

I repeat therefore that, in spite of the isolated, though generous efforts of Mr. Bright and Lord Jocelyn, there is no regular advocate for the natives in the House of Commons, as there is and always has been for the colonists; but the only permanent representative of India in that House, is some official advocate against the natives. There is, then, almost no complaint; but does this prove there are no grievances? I will endeavour to answer this question.

The more I study the subject the more I feel a growing conviction that the natives were happier, not merely under their good princes, but happier under the average of their native sovereigns, than they have been under an English Bureaucracy.

In discussing this point, we have always hitherto had the advantage of being the judges in our own cause; therefore, because we first acquired power in India during a revolutionary period, we have assumed that the normal condition of Indian Governments was a chronic state of revolution; and we have assumed that the mass of the people must have been miserable, because we can prove that many of their native sovereigns were warlike, bigoted, &c. But we must recollect that India is as large as the whole of Europe; and suppose we were to apply the same ingenious process of crimination to Europe that we do to India,\*—suppose we were to reckon up the wars and acts of oppression of European princes, as we do for the native princes, down to the end of the eighteenth century, and calculate the amount of bloodshed and human misery caused by their ambition and selfish indifference to the fate of the masses,—suppose we were to rake out of a few centuries of history, for Europe as we do for India, all the deliberate cruelties inflicted on mankind by religious fanaticism,—finally, suppose we were to see what the memoir-writers of the time say of the condition of the great bulk of the people in Europe, down to the period of the French Revolution?

If we were to do this with any good faith, we should begin to find it impossible to cast the first stone at India. We should

\* Vide Gulliver's defence of "his dear country" to the king of the Brobdingnags.

begin to admit that if there had been wars, if there had been bigotry, if there had been misgovernment in India, there had been such things elsewhere. But there had been many compensations in India; there had been long-established Governments, and great masses of contented subjects; the Mahommedan conquerors had settled in the country, and identified themselves with the interests and sympathies of its inhabitants; they had, as the rule, respected the customs, and religion, and private landed property of the people, and any infraction of the rule was condemned by their own historians as it would be by Europeans; they had preserved the municipal institutions, and arbitration system, and excellent police, which gave the people the best security for person and property at the least cost; they never burthened the country with a *national debt*, and had spent great sums out of the taxes for the people, on public works and grants for education, and had not attempted to destroy their native aristocracy, whose capital was the support of the labourers, manufacturers, and merchants of India: finally, they had not treated the people as an inferior race of beings; they had maintained a free social intercourse with them; they had not confined them to such low ill-paid offices as they could not fill themselves; they had frequently left the most important share of the civil offices of State in their hands, and had allowed them to rise daily from among the lower orders to all ranks of civil and military employment, which "kept up the spirit of the people," said Mr. Elphinstone.

In short, the Mahommedans did not, by dividing the community into two distinct bodies of privileged foreigners and native serfs, systematically degrade a whole people. In a long course of time, and among a hundred millions of men, they had oppressed many; but they had left hope to all; they had thrown open to all their subjects the prizes of honest ambition, and allowed every man of talent, industry, and courage to aspire to titles of honour or political power, or high military commands, with corresponding grants of land.

Very different from this has been the government of the English conquerors of India.

We have kept the peace in the country for our own sakes, and this has of course, to a certain extent, increased cultivation and commerce, because the instinctive efforts of men to better their condition will always ensure the material progress of any people, until they reach the point where misgovernment sets a limit to progress.

But this benefit of keeping the peace in India is the only one our rule has conferred on the natives, to make up for the loss of all the compensations mentioned above; and if I show this to be the case—if against one benefit is to be set our systematic impoverishment and degradation of a whole people, what will after ages say of our passion for aggrandizement in India? Will it be sufficient to have changed the mode of extortion, to have substituted the dry-rot of English Bureaucracy for the violence of Roman proconsuls, to prevent posterity from condemning with one voice our selfish policy in India? I deeply feel that it will not: I feel painfully that, although for a while the system may deceive or corrupt contemporary opinion, and triumph over such feeble protests as mine, its triumph will one day be appealed against in a higher court of opinion, and be reversed by the judgment of history; and in that day the verdict of the whole civilised world will be given against England, and the curse of many nations will fall upon her, for her selfish treatment of India.

However, the passion for aggrandizement above-mentioned is both excused and denied. It is excused on the ground that our territorial extension in India cannot be helped; that it is "in the natural course of things." Why, of course it is, so long as we take every precaution in constituting the Home Government to ensure its grasping tendency, which is our present policy.

We now make a Home Government which must theoretically know and care little about the natives, and covet any immediate increase of revenue and patronage. But suppose we made the Home Government on a totally different theory; suppose its very constitution ensured its knowing and caring a good deal about the natives, and proportionably less for patronage, and caring more for the ultimate than immediate increase of revenue—more for its real than its apparent value; if we did this, it

would then be as much "in the natural course of things" for the Government not to be grasping, as it now is for it to be so.

Again, the passion for aggrandisement is denied, and it is said that our wars in India were defensive wars, by way of disproving the fact. Defensive wars! why the least scrupulous of European conquerors, Louis XIV., Napoleon, . . . all have found the same cloak for their ambition, and called their wars defensive measures with the same assurance; so that, with the Scinde and Afghanistan wars fresh in the reader's memory, this exploded old State fiction is not worth answering,\* as it is not wars alone that prove this passion for aggrandisement.

The reader must recollect that it is not by conquest from enemies, but by cessions extorted from friends, from our unfortunate allies, that a great part of our territory has always been, and continues to be, obtained. The amount of territory taken by Lord Wellesley in time of peace was prodigious, and at the present day, with profound internal peace, the process of absorbing the native States is going on steadily, not at the expense of enemies but of friends. It is no security to the native Princes to have treaties with us, or to recall times when their alliance was hailed by us as a signal good fortune in a critical period. On some we impose contingents, which keep them in bondage, ruin their finances, force them to oppress their subjects, and end by furnishing us an excuse for interference and annexation. In the case of others, we coolly set aside the lawful succession at their deaths, turn the heirs adrift, and seize on their inheritance. In the same spirit we are confiscating the estates of the landed aristocracy, and it is believed that, what with resump-tions of enams, and rent-free lands and lapses of jagheers, we have, since 1819, appropriated landed property of the value of three millions sterling of annual revenue.

\* However, as I find an illusion prevalent that we were not the aggressors, at any rate, in the *first* war with the Sikhs, I will refer to authorities who prove the contrary,—viz., "History of the Reigning Family of Lahore," by Major C. Smythe, p. xxii. of Introduction; and "History of the Sikhs," by Captain Cunningham, pp. 313 to 322.

And why, for what purpose, is this incessant aggrandizement? Is it to give the natives "the blessings of the British rule?" Let us see what these blessings have been.

1stly, In Bengal, by one of the most sweeping confiscations the world ever saw, we transferred the whole landed property of the community to a body of tax-gatherers; but under such conditions that this body of newly-invented landlords were ruined almost to a man, and sold up by our Collectors, and their estates transferred to new men, within ten or twelve years; and in making the new landlords, we promised legislative protection to their tenants, yet we have left them from that day to this at the mercy of the Zemindars, and only the other day it was said by the "Friend of India," Sept. 16th, 1852:—"A whole century will scarcely be sufficient to remedy the evils of that Perpetual Settlement, and we have not yet begun the task. Under its baneful influence a population of more than twenty millions have been reduced to a state of such utter wretchedness of condition, and such abjectness of feeling as it would be difficult to parallel in any other country."

2ndly, In Madras, by another sweeping confiscation, perhaps without a precedent in history, we assumed that the Government was the owner of all property in land, and that in the words of Government, we should "avoid all material evil if the surplus produce was in all cases made the utmost extent of our demand;" this being the landlord's rent, and leaving to the cultivator only a bare sufficiency for his own subsistence; and this surplus produce being demanded from the ryots, not as a corn-rent but as a money-rent, and being assessed and collected in districts averaging 7000 square miles, and 150,000 individual tenants, by one or two Europeans, assisted by informers, with notoriously incorrect surveys.

3rdly, When this Ryotwar system had ruined Madras, we forced it upon Bombay, in spite of Mr. Elphinstone's opposition, and nowhere did we at any time lower our assessments until the agriculturists were beggared, and we retain the system to this day.

4thly, We established and maintained for the better part of a century, transit duties, which broke the manufacturers, decayed



the towns, and demoralised the people of India, and left it a matter of wonder that any trade could be carried on at all.

5thly, We destroyed those municipal institutions which had, according to Mr. Elphinstone, "preserved the people of India through all their revolutions, and conduced in a high degree to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence." We destroyed these, and with them the excellent arbitration system and native police which gave the people full security for person and property at the least possible cost; and we set up instead an exotic system of English law, which has so utterly deprived the people of security, besides corrupting their morals, that in our civil courts, "which give every opening for fraud, perjury, and forgery," all the most important interests of the country have been rapidly converted and transferred, and no man's estate is safe, and in our criminal courts nothing but his most singular ill-luck can bring an accomplished criminal to justice; and even within a circle of sixty or seventy miles round our capital city of Calcutta, no man of property can retire to rest without danger of being the victim of Dacoits before morning.

6thly, We levied great taxes on the people, and drained away one-seventh of their net-revenue to England, at the same time burthening them with a load of *national debt* for the first time in their history; and yet in spite of their admitted rights and necessities, we gave them back next to nothing in public works; never anything for education, unless forced by pressure from without, and the vigorous initiative of private individuals, and then as little as possible; and in most districts beyond comparison less for roads, bridges, tanks, &c., than has been given by wealthy native merchants and country gentlemen.

7thly, We have long been systematically destroying the native aristocracy, who furnished consumers for the articles of commerce and luxury, who stimulated the production of the labourers, the manufacturers, and the merchants, who were the patrons of art, the promoters of agricultural improvement, the co-operators in public works, and the only class who could enable us to carry out any comprehensive amelioration of native society: and we are

extinguishing the native States, of which the effect is, according to Sir Thomas Munro, "in place of raising, to debase the whole people," and according to the Duke of Wellington, "to degrade and beggar the natives, making them all enemies;" and meanwhile, our threat of absorption hanging over their heads, deprives both princes and aristocracy of any inducement to improve their country.

8thly, We regard the natives rather as vassals and servants than as the ancient owners and masters of the country; we have as little as possible of social intercourse with them, and although we allow them to do above ninety-seven per cent. of the work of administration, we monopolise the credit and emoluments of it, and keep every high office for ourselves. The establishment of our rule in any part of India at once shuts the door on the honest and laudable ambition of the natives; all prospect of enjoying those honours and distinctions, and lucrative situations of trust and power, which reconcile men to the oppressions of arbitrary rulers in native States, is thenceforward cut off; we divide the community into a government of foreign officials on the one hand, and a nation of serfs on the other; of foreigners, constantly shifting their quarters, having no permanent connection with the country, and always looking forward to the day when they shall return to England with a fortune, and of serfs, who are the natives of the land, linked and identified with its interests and sympathies, and many of whom are regarded as little better than menial servants, who might have been governors of provinces but for us; all of whom as a rule are confined to such low, ill-paid offices, as the Covenanted Civil Service disdains to accept.

And therefore is the spirit of India broken under the Company's government—therefore do we hear of robberies and oppressions in Oude and Hyderabad, and yet the people do not fly to us, because hope is with them, and the future is not a blank; instead of flying into our territory, they go from it; often in flocks; come into it they never do: only the other day some important works on the Kistnah were stopped because the people of the country fled, *en masse*, into the Nizam's dominions.

And why do they prefer to live under "effete" native Governments? because they do not feel themselves degraded as they do under us, for it is not the arbitrary power of a national sovereign, but subjugation to a foreign one that destroys national power and extinguishes national spirit, and with this the mainspring of whatever is laudable both in public and private life—but we make them feel the rule of the stranger to their heart's core; we set a barrier of privilege between the natives and their foreign masters; the lowest European officer in a black or red coat, is above every native gentleman, though the latter may be the descendant of a line of princes, and is often a man of the most chivalrous feelings and the highest accomplishments; nevertheless, we treat them as an inferior race of beings, and we are making them so; our monopoly of every high office, from generation to generation, is systematically degrading the people of India; the deterioration of native character under our rule is manifest to every one; and Sir Thomas Munro went so far as to say, "it would be more desirable that we should be expelled from the country altogether, than that the result of our system of Government should be such an abasement of a whole people." Here are samples of "the blessings of the British rule!"

I have not the skill to state the case in eloquent language, and cannot express what I feel about it, but a man of imagination who pleaded this cause would often bring tears into his reader's eyes; however, I do beseech the reader to consider this series of facts, told in the plainest, simplest manner, and to say whether such "*blessings*" can justify our passion for aggrandizement in India?

And I have not done: I have yet to describe the means and the end of gratifying this passion; because, considering that our bureaucratic, irresponsible Government of India, has lately shown that it would no longer respect the clearest rights and treaties when it could find a pretext for grasping a little more revenue and patronage; and considering that Malcolm, Elphinstone, Metcalfe, Russell, Munro, the Duke of Wellington, and most of our great Indian statesmen, have emphatically condemned the absorption of the native States, and that our unfortunate allies,

above 250 native Princes, in the presence of an overwhelming army, with no tribunal before which they can carry their complaints, and placed as a class out of the pale of the law, that they have now confiscation always hanging over their heads, I must explain the outrageous breach of faith involved in our absorption of native States, and show what the Duke meant when he said it "degraded and beggared the natives and made them all enemies."

The means now employed by the Government to absorb the native States are to deny the right of adoption. Probably the reader is aware that adoption is one of the most solemn duties of religion in India, in the case of failure of sons: which continually happens in the reigning families. By this ceremony the adopted son becomes as much an heir as an heir of the body, and Mr. Holt Mackenzie has proved beyond dispute that there is no foundation for drawing a distinction between succession to private property and succession to political power, in the force and effect of adoption, but the adopted son acquires all and every one of the rights of a legitimate heir of the body.

Of course this right of adoption is the dearest privilege of the native Princes, and the most necessary to them, as their States would soon fall into our hands without it; and this right has been given to the people of India in express words, by an early Act of Parliament, and has been formally asserted by Governors-General, as Lords Amherst, Metcalfe, and Auckland, and asserted by the law officers of the Government and the courts of Bengal over and over again, and has been admitted by us for many years in the succession of native States, without any requiring of previous notice, or any reserve or qualification whatsoever, in a great number of precedents.

Nevertheless, the Government has at length decided, with the object avowed without disguise, of getting more revenue, that, as the paramount power in India, succeeding to the authority of the Emperor of Delhi, its sanction to any act of adoption is necessary, and it is entitled to withhold this sanction; and accordingly it has within the last few years set aside three adoptions, and confiscated the native states of Sattarah, Colabah, and Mandavie, although, in

each of these three cases there were collateral blood relations and heirs of the deceased prince, after the adopted son.

Now, I will first say a few words about the Emperor of Delhi, and put him out of the way; for he has no more to do with the question than the man in the moon. When the poor Emperor came into our hands, as Scindiah's prisoner, blinded twenty years before, did we restore him to his empire? Certainly not! Did he then give us a grant of his paramount power in India? if so, how came we to make treaties with his feudatories as independent Princes? The fact is, as all the world knows, our paramount power was won, and is kept, by the sword. And such are the "blessings of the British rule," that we are obliged to remain armed to the teeth to keep it; and we had better not forget that we keep it by the sword of a native army, which has a strong personal interest in the right of adoption.

I now come to the question of the sanction. Undoubtedly, where there is a dispute or doubt as to the succession, the sanction of the paramount power is necessary; because the paramount power is entitled and bound to keep the peace in India, and to prevent any violation of rights, or outrage on the feelings of the people, which may endanger the public safety; and in a disputed or doubtful case of succession, its sanction is necessary, to prove that an adoption is legal and regular, and to award the succession to the rightful claimant.

But this sanction of the paramount power is a judicial sanction; it is the same thing as the Lord Chancellor's decision on a will; and when the sanction of the paramount power is required or requested in allied States, not subject or belonging to it, but connected with it by treaties, its duty is to find out the heir, and to give the succession to the heir, not to seize on the inheritance itself, in defiance of all the heirs.

It was as much an act of robbery for us to appropriate the principalities of Sattarah, Calabah, and Mandavie, in defiance of all the heirs, as it would be for the Lord Chancellor to pocket a legacy because it was being litigated in his court. We are improving upon a precedent set by Caligula, in our violation of the right of adoption. When Caligula was invited to a nuptial

feast, he carried away his friend's wife : when the British Resident is invited to the death-bed of a native Prince, he turns his friend's widow and orphan out of doors, and confiscates their inheritance.

And they do not take these things so quietly in the country as we do here. We hear of the absorption of a native State, and go about our business, and think no more of the matter ; like a ship's crew, who duly note in the log, "run down a vessel in the night : all hands lost ;" then pursue their voyage and forget it. But these things lodge and rankle in men's minds in India, where too many of our troops are interested in this question of adoption ; and, as I said before, *the free press is doing its work.*

I am convinced that the Government will some day regret the system that is making so many enemies. It will some day absorb a native state too many, and feel a pang like one who has put a fruit into his mouth, with a hornet in it. We must not expect the Rajput Princes to lie still like oysters, waiting to be dredged. They are, and ever were, a high-spirited, martial race, prompt to appeal to the sword, and just the men to say, in a fit of exasperation, "better an end with fear than fear without an end."

Meanwhile the natives have a stereotyped expression for their communications with us, which gives us a false confidence. We tread on ice, and forget the current of passion flowing beneath, which imperils our footing. The natives seem what they know we expect them to appear, and we do not see their real feelings : we know not how hot the stove may be under its polished surface.

For the fire is not out ; we are obliged to keep it up by our native army, which may blaze into a conflagration, and burn the empire. There may be some Procida, matchless in diplomatic art and tenacity of purpose, who will travel for years to knit enemies against us ; who will mine the ground under our feet, and lay the train of combustibles : there may be some outrage, which will suddenly raise a cry, terrible as that which broke forth when the bells of Monreale were sounding to vespers, a cry of "Death to the Englishmen !" there may be some conspiracy, of which, as at Vellore, we have not even a suspicion, until the native regiments open their fire on our barracks : and, as a merchant who is

obliged to throw all his treasure overboard to save the ship, a storm may arise in India which will cost us more to maintain our power than all we have gained, or can ever hope to gain, by our confiscation.

Nor does the injury stop with the families of the Princes. Native States support a numerous class of civil and military functionaries, who cannot find employment under us; besides the holders of jagheers, enams, &c., who know that their property is doomed when they fall under our rule. And in a state like the last absorbed, in place of thirty or forty natives exercising the civil administration of affairs, with salaries of from 100 to 200 rupees a month, which they spend in the country, we substitute one or two Europeans, receiving from 2000 to 3000 rupees a month, and remitting the bulk of their salaries to England. Moreover, the bread of almost every man in and about the capital of a native State depends on the expenditure of the native Government; and not only many thousands of natives directly dependent upon it, but the manufacturers and shopkeepers dependent upon them, are nearly all ruined by our absorption; and their distress reacts on the cultivators of the soil. This is why the Duke said that absorption "degrades and beggars the natives, and makes them all enemies."

Similar results follow, in proportion, from the resumption of the landed estates of the aristocracy. Shore says: "To bring the subject home to an English heart and mind, let us turn our thoughts to our native land, and compare the effects produced by individual example and influence there, with what might have been the case here. Let us represent to ourselves an English country gentleman; overlooking his estate, promoting the improvement of agriculture, superintending the roads and public buildings, and subscribing to the local charities; as a neighbour, opening his house, and by his hospitality affording the means of social intercourse to his neighbours; all the different members of his family contributing their share to the general good. Contrast the picture with the state of things in India. The upper classes of the natives, who used to occupy the above situations, ruined and their places supplied by foreigners, who keep aloof from the people, and

whose ultimate object is to return to England with a fortune." He adds: "As to the number of respectable people who have suffered, let any one leave the English stations, few and far between, and go into the country towns and villages, and there see the innumerable houses which not many years ago were in good repair, and inhabited by men who lived in the style of gentlemen, keeping up establishments of servants, horses, elephants, and equipages, but which are now all falling to decay, while their owners or their descendants are dwelling in mud huts, with little more than the merest necessities of life." And let the reader recollect that the destruction of the native aristocracy is still going on with unrelenting vigour, as one of the "blessings of the British rule."

How can we reconcile it to our conscience or our reason to treat the natives in this manner? It was a beautiful fiction of the Greeks, that Ulysses could no longer feign madness when his child was thrown before his plough; but we, who have allowed a Bureaucracy to plough over India till the "iron has entered into the soul" of her people, we have been essentially mad without seeming so.

However, I believe there is a secret cause why the English public feel so little sympathy for the natives, which is entirely founded on a misunderstanding, and on ignorance of the native character. Lord Ellenborough said last session, that "no intelligent people would submit to our Government;" and though he alone would say it, I am satisfied in my own mind that many think it, and that my countrymen in their hearts despise the natives of India, because they do submit to our Government.

Nevertheless, this submission does not argue cowardice in those who submit. We enforce submission by an overwhelming mercenary army; and as long as that army is faithful, submission is a matter of necessity; but although, under such circumstances, they submit to our Government, there is not a trace on the face of the earth who possess more personal courage than the men of India; and the fact is not altered by their subjection to us, because the bravest people in the world may be subjugated by foreigners when they are divided against themselves, which



was the case with the natives of India when we founded our empire there.

And not only were they divided, but for half a century before an opening was given for our supremacy; the great powers of the country had been shattered by wars, which may be called wars of giants, from the magnitude of their operations. In the last great battle, in 1798, which decided the contest between the Mahrattas and Rajpûts, the forces brought into the field by the latter were 125,000 strong, and by the former 111,000 strong; large bodies of the troops on both sides being armed and disciplined in the European fashion; and I will quote the description of a charge of cavalry in this action, taken from the mouth of an eye-witness, Colonel Skinner, to show the gallantry of the men:—"We now saw Chevalier Dudennaig's brigade or division, which was on the left, charged by the Rahtórs. He received them nobly, but was cut to pieces by them. Out of 8000 men he had not 200 left. The Rahtórs, more than ten thousand in number, were seen approaching from a distance; the tramp of their immense and compact body, rising like thunder over the roar of the battle. They came on first at a slow hand-canter, which increased in speed as they advanced. The well-served guns of the brigade showered grape upon their dense mass, cutting down hundreds at each discharge; but this had no effect in arresting their progress. On they came, like a whirlwind, trampling over 1500 of their own body, destroyed by the cannon of the brigade. Neither the murderous volleys from the muskets, nor the serried hedge of bayonets, could check or shake them; they poured like a torrent on and over the brigade, and rode it fairly down, leaving scarcely a vestige of it remaining, as if the sheer weight of the mass had ground it to pieces." Again, we are accustomed to consider the battle of Waterloo one of the most sanguinary that ever was fought, yet our loss in some Indian battles has been about double the loss at Waterloo. The proportion of killed and wounded at Waterloo was one to six; that of Assaye was just double, one to three, and several have been near it; and the loss in the Sutlej battles, in 1846, was much more severe than that of Waterloo being in the proportion of one to five.

I could add many other proofs of the personal bravery of the natives; but it has always been conspicuous: so I will merely remind the reader of the brilliant native armies of Clive, Lawrence, and Coote, which carved out our way to empire. And yet those armies, unrivalled for valour and loyalty, were officered by native gentlemen, with only one or two Europeans to a brigade; and this was our original system in India, until the thirst for patronage, as usual, surmounted every other consideration, and substituted European for native officers.

Of late years sheer financial necessity has forced us to return to some extent to the old system, which is copied in our "irregular corps;" and the admirable state of efficiency and discipline of these "irregular corps" shows that we can employ the natives when we choose in situations of trust and power, and that it answers perfectly to do so.

To return to my subject, I think I have said enough to show that we should do very wrong to refuse our sympathy to the natives from a doubt of their courage; and they have many other qualities which entitle them to our warm and kind consideration. I have noticed, in the chapter on public works, their disposition to found benevolent institutions, and they are remarkable "for a degree of charity in private life which renders the poor independent of public relief in India. "Their large family circles," says Mr. Campbell, "assist and support one another to an admirable extent. Families generally live together as on the Continent, and the young men who go out to service return, and remit money most dutifully to their families." The native merchants are particularly distinguished for their honourable mode of doing business, as well as for their enterprise; and Englishmen who have resided in native States bear witness to the simplicity and straightforward manner of the agricultural classes both in their dealings with them and amongst each other. It is only when they are corrupted by external influences, by a demoralising judicial system, or oppressive taxation, that art and cunning are substituted for candour, as the only protection against the hand of injustice and power; and I will add that those who have had much intercourse with the natives, in a commercial, political, or

military character, almost invariably speak of them in very high terms; it is only among such judicial functionaries as have centred their observations on the most vicious classes of native society, and have overlooked the rest, that their detractors are to be found.

Finally, it has been said by one of the most experienced members of the Indian service, that, "for the transaction of business, whether in accounts, diplomatic correspondence, or the conduct of judicial, magisterial, or financial affairs, the natives are seldom surpassed. They are, on the whole, an intelligent, tractable, and loyal people, not deficient in energy when there is a motive for exertion, and eminently calculated to promote the arts of civil life."

And now I have done. I have shown that although there may be more complaint of the Government of England in one year, than we hear of the Government of India during two or three Charters, yet there has been suffering, not loud but deep, in the latter country; its cup of grief has filled silently to the brim, ay, it has filled to running over, though few individuals complained of it in England. The unfortunate natives have had their rights of property confiscated; their claims on our justice and humanity trampled under foot; their manufacturers, towns, and agriculturists beggared; their excellent municipal institutions broken up; their judicial security taken away; their morality corrupted; their patrons systematically destroyed; and even their religious customs violated, by what are conventionally called the "blessings of the British rule." These great results at once strike the eye of any man who goes seriously into the question of our Indian administration; like the tombs by the side of the road at the entrance of ancient cities, these monuments of the power of a Bureaucracy are the first things we see, and in them lie buried the hopes of India.

And as abuses were maintained in the provinces of the Roman Republic because the patricians who retired from their magistracy were shielded by the senate, so is the Indian Government regularly shielded by Parliament. Nay, at this hour it is an understood thing that the ministry intends to seal the misery of India by

leasing her out for another term of years to the Company's Government, which will again be exhorted to *govern paternally*, just as Isaac Walton exhorts his angler, in hooking a worm, "to handle him as if he loved him." The Legislature would not dare openly and directly to oppress India, yet dares to vote others the power to do so.

I cannot help warning my countrymen that if they stand by, and look quietly on, while this political martyrdom is once more consummated, their consenting unto the deed will leave a heavy debt of vengeance against them, not only on earth but in heaven; it will provoke that retributive justice, which frequently allows an individual to escape, but never, never fails to overtake a nation. Let them weigh this well before they say, On our heads and on our children's be it! It is true, that we have an overwhelming mercenary army, and the word is passed, no danger above the horizon; but some may be coming; and in history we are always wise after the event; and when it is too late, when the bolt has fallen, and the penalty has been paid, then for the first time do politicians see why a Government based on injustice and bad faith could not stand; and what innumerable consequences of its own wrong-doing were all the while undermining its power. God forbid that we should be wise too late in India!

I have one more word to say in conclusion. Never, since the world began, was so great an opportunity of doing good offered to a great nation, as that which Providence now offers to us in India. England—enlightened, Christian England—is the sovereign arbiter and empress of that glorious land, with its hundred and fifty millions of "intelligent, tractable, and loyal" people, and she might throw herself on the fallen empire; as Elisha did on the Shunammite's child, "and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands,"—so might England stretch herself on the prostrate Empire, and warm and quicken its torpid body, and breathe new life into India. She might raise the natives, and watch their progress, moral and material, as a mother watches her child, and loves it the better for the anxieties it has cost her; she might behold, from year to year, the blessings she conferred,

and feel the tie strengthening which attached her to India; she might have the answer of a good conscience, and the esteem of the whole civilised world.

Oh, my countrymen; may Heaven itself soften your hearts, and awaken your sympathy for this interesting people; may it teach you not to reject your fated opportunity, nor again throw such a pearl as India before an irresponsible Bureaucracy.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SYSTEM OF PARLIAMENTARY LEGISLATION FOR INDIA.

DEAN SWIFT said, in reprobating the neglect of education in his day, that it was a common remark in families who had wealth enough to afford to have their sons good for nothing, "why should my son be a scholar, when it is not intended he should live by his learning?" He added, that by the same rule another man might say, "why should my son be honest, temperate, just, or charitable, when he does not mean to depend on any of these qualities for a maintenance!" And by the same rule the House of Commons actually do say, "why should one of the Ministry be compelled to prove the success of his department, when the Ministry does not depend on Indian affairs for its existence?"

This is true enough, and the fate of an English Ministry now depends on matters of home administration, and on home questions, and parties, and politics, quite independent of the affairs of India. But I will show that this state of things is eminently unsafe and unconstitutional, and from the time when, seventy years ago, a mere legislative oversight threw India out of the list of English political questions, it has been the cause of shameful abuses in India ever since; it is the cause of perilous mal-administration at the present time; it has led to an almost incredible neglect of the subject by the House of Commons, and after all there is not in the whole range of our national interests any one more vital to the national life than our tenure of dominion in the East.

It is wonderful that my countrymen do not see the palpable contradiction of leaving India out of the list of their political

questions. Why, there is not one of them of more importance to us! Is not our preservation of India an integral part of the Imperial policy? Is it not necessary to our commerce that India should be prosperous, and to our safety that it should not be disaffected? Would not a violation of religion and the rights of property, which lit a flame of insurrection in the Rajpootanah and sent over three-fourths of our Bengal sepoy to the enemy, instantly paralyze the right arm of England? Would not even a financial crisis in India shake the British Empire to its foundation?

Let the reader imagine the same mistake being made in the case of England that was made in the case of India. Let him conceive a Minister, "with a majority behind," coming down and telling the House that, "the ways and means were an exceedingly awkward subject; there always had been a good deal of debating and ministerial risk about it, and there always would be; therefore it would make things pleasant if the House would vote that for twenty years there should be no more budgets; and the House should interfere with any thing else it liked except with taxation: and if the Ministry in office, twenty years afterwards, preferred to revive the budget, it might." Suppose such a measure had been passed in England seventy years ago, and the army had been strong enough to keep the people down, what would our commerce and rights of property have been worth now? What would have become of our municipal institutions? how much judicial reform should we have had? would there not have been an annual deficit in our finances by this time, instead of the surplus? Yet this is substantially the very same measure which was passed for India seventy years ago, and which of course removed her in a very short time from the list of our political questions, and rendered her Government so thoroughly irresponsible, that it now threatens to be the ruin of both countries.

And after all, this was a mere oversight of the Legislature, and it shows how blind men are to the future, even the wisest of them, that although in those days the public mind was absorbed by Indian questions, and there was a most able and bitter opposi-

tion, eager to find any handle for an attack on the Minister, and headed by such men as Fox and Burke, not one of them foresaw an incidental and indirect consequence of Mr. Pitt's bill, which has had more effect than any direct provision, and has imperceptibly and silently produced a complete revolution in Parliamentary legislation for India, and thrown a subject, which used to excite intense interest in the Parliament and the nation, out of the list of our political questions. The point was this: as long as the Indian budget was presented to Parliament by parties indifferent to, and sometimes hostile to the Minister, and always viewed with distrust by the House of Commons, these parties were obliged to give not merely a simple publication of accounts, but a periodical exposure of Indian affairs, with detailed information on all subjects connected with our Indian policy, and this kept the members of Parliament well informed upon the question, and enabled them to discuss it, or rather ensured their discussing it, from year to year.

And of course this constant supply of information was incomparably more necessary in the case of India than in any English question, not only because all kinds of political intelligence are freely published in England, which are concealed in India, but because the mere distance of the people of India from English politicians shows them to us in a point of view so remote, that we are too often disposed to *see them as if they were not*, and to neglect complaints uttered so far off that they cannot reach our ears.

However, from the time when the Indian budget became the Minister's budget, as he naturally did not feel inclined to provoke Parliamentary inspection of his administration, and as everybody had overlooked the necessity of making an express provision to meet the case, the periodical supply of information came to an end with the state of things which had led to it, and the consequence was that in a very few years Members of Parliament ceased to be well informed upon the subject, or competent to discuss it, and so India imperceptibly fell out of the list of our political questions, and its Government became irresponsible; and irresponsible, it will remain until the Minister is compelled



to give Parliament once more a detailed annual exposure of Indian affairs.

From the time when India ceased in this manner to be a political question, the neglect of it by Parliament has been something so incredible, that unless when I relate it I could appeal to history at every step,\* I should not expect to be believed; and the description of it will be a lesson to members of Parliament that they are as helpless as children in Indian affairs when they do not receive regular periodical information about them.

At the time of the passing of the Charter in 1794, the House of Commons little thought that the recent "measure for the relief of the Zemindars," the "Perpetual Settlement," would effect a complete social revolution, and a sweeping confiscation of property in the doomed provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa; nor could they imagine that while Mr. Dundas was giving them a glowing description of Indian prosperity, the despatches of the Governor-General contained a minute and shocking picture of the sufferings of the people, from the vices of the Government! But at this period, from the causes above mentioned, India was already ceasing, and had almost ceased to be an English political question, and as, in Mr. Mill's words, "ministerial influence in Parliament can always get ministerial praises received as articles of belief, without any real grounds for it," Mr. Dundas literally managed to persuade the nation that the financial state of India was a subject not merely of rejoicing and triumph, but even of astonishment, as affording a surplus revenue! A few years more threw a new and terrible light on the condition of our native fellow-subjects. The surplus revenue had turned out, as Indian surplus revenue *invariably* does, a complete bubble, and it gradually transpired in England that our unhappy provinces in India had been a scene of fiscal tyranny, of crime, and of suffering, unexampled in any civilised country since the decay of the Roman empire. Forced at length to investigate, the House of Commons, in 1810, not only corroborated the above charges, but accused the Indian Government of continual misrepresentation; whether

\* Mill and Wilson's History of India, vols. v. vii. ix.

the Zemindar or the ryot were the sufferer, the Government always found something to commend."

Meanwhile, as if to balance the calamities of our northern Provinces, a new revenue system called Ryotwar was introduced in the south, viz., a settlement with individual cultivators on the basis of assuming 50 per cent. of the produce, in money, as the due of the Government! After some years' experience of this system, its originator had discovered that "its radical defect was our over-assessment, which augments the public and reduces the private property in the soil to such a degree as to involve the necessity of ousting all between the Government and the cultivator."

This was indeed a *radical defect*; it was simply the confiscation of all the landlord's property in the soil by foreign conquerors! Moreover, the Madras Board of Revenue had accused the inventors of this system of "ignorantly denying, and by their denial abolishing private property in land," and though "professing to limit their demand on each field, in fact by establishing for such limit an unattainable maximum, assessing the ryot at discretion." Finally, the ablest administrator of the Ryotwar system, Sir Thomas Munro, had declared that unless the assessment were reduced from 25 to 33 per cent., the land would go out of cultivation. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, the Government had but recently enforced the adoption of this Ryotwar system, without any reduction of the assessment, when, under such circumstances, the House of Commons was once more called upon solemnly to judge the Indian Government, and to confirm or alter a system which had produced so much pain and ruin, and threatened to produce so much more.

I pass over judicial and other grievances for the present, but with the above facts recorded on official authority, the House of Commons discussed the renewal of the Charter in 1813. Surely it was then at length time to do something for the natives; time to amend a despotic Government evidently well adapted for conquest and aggrandisement, but for nothing else; time to revive the periodical statement of Indian affairs, which used to draw public attention to them almost every year; time

to adopt the plan recommended so long before by Warren Hastings, and again urged by the Marquis of Wellesley, to ascertain and define the rights of property of every description in land, and make such definitions the basis of adjudication. But no! it is painful to record the transaction. The natives of India were treated like so many cattle. Their interests, their feelings, their hopes, and their fears, were alike forgotten. The only thing the House of Commons was well informed about was certain private, pecuniary, English interests. The battle of the Charter was fought over the heads of the natives, by parties eager for their trade, but too eager to give a thought to the myriads of human beings who yielded its profit. The leaders in the House of Commons, that is, ministers intent on securing Parliamentary support, Directors and merchants, greedy for private interests, at length struck their bargain, and having done the best they could for themselves, and professed much concern for the natives, they agreed on a fresh twenty years lease of India, to the old irresponsible Government.

And now the "radical defect" was allowed to have full swing—the House of Commons had decided that a system which "ousted all between the government and the cultivator," and "assessed the ryot at an unattainable maximum," might be applied with impunity to the natives of India, and the Ryotwar system fell with crushing effect on our southern provinces.

The miserable inhabitants of Madras endured this oppression until the year 1827, when Sir Thomas Munro carried out, as Governor, the reductions he had recommended in 1807. And this relief was only obtained at last by the efforts of Sir Thomas Munro and other private individuals, and the pressure of public opinion, not by any act of the House of Commons, which never interfered to protect the natives, nor manifested the slightest sympathy with their sufferings, though it had reserved to itself full power to superintend and control the Indian Government.

In the year 1833 the necessity for renewing the Charter once more brought the whole question of Indian administration under the consideration of the House of Commons. There had now been half a century's experience of irresponsible Government in

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India, and again the House of Commons had the opportunity of altering or confirming the normal system of confiscation which had consigned Bengal to ruin in 1793, Madras in 1813, and which was beginning to crush Bombay in 1833.

Moreover, there was now abundant information, which might have been accessible to the House of Commons, of the sufferings and claims of the natives in other respects. The frightful evils of the judicial system had been incessantly recorded by official authority for nearly forty years—the necessity of constructing public works had been loudly proclaimed—the transit duties, now completing the ruin of the manufacturers and towns of India, had been denounced as “the curse of the country”—the attempt to conduct all affairs by European agency, and exclude the natives from every office which it was possible to offer to an Englishman, had been confessed a notorious failure—the destruction of the native municipal institutions had been admitted to be, subversive of the security of person and property among the people—the inhumanity and impolicy of destroying the native territorial aristocracy had been strikingly exposed by Sir John Malcolm and others—the identical recommendation of Warren Hastings and the Marquis of Wellesley, which I have already mentioned, had now been endorsed by the great name of Lord Hastings; and finally the most fatal instance of the operation of the “revenue screw” that ever was known in India, the famous Bundelkund case, was going on at this very time,—and what did the House of Commons do? They met the judicial evils by the mockery of an additional member of Council at Calcutta; they met the necessity of appointing the natives to high office, strongly insisted on by such men as Malcolm, Elphinstone, and Munro, by the mockery of declaring their eligibility, and leaving it to the Directors to carry out this eligibility, who of course treated it with utter contempt.

In fact, they showed as before, that the only matters on which they were really well informed were certain private, pecuniary, English interests. There was still a rag of the Company's trade to be fought for, and this fight the House of Commons understood and sympathised with, but beyond this they showed that they did not look upon their responsibility in legislating for so many

millions of our native fellow-subjects as being really serious; that they were ready to vote anything that suited the Ministry of the day in Indian affairs, and that they performed this duty of deciding questions on which the welfare of India was to depend for another twenty years, "not merely with indifference to, but with feelings of impatience and disgust at," the whole subject.

Of course, under such circumstances, not one of the above grievances was redressed, or even discussed in earnest. As wretched mariners who approach the harbour-light, only to be driven out to sea again by the storm, the unfortunate natives only witnessed a renewal of the Charter to have all their hopes disappointed, and India was again consigned to an irresponsible Government for another twenty years, to undergo all the mal-administration I have described, and a great deal more than I have described.

And this "not mere indifference to, but rather feeling of impatience and disgust at," everything which concerns the natives of India, is still the prevailing sentiment in the House of Commons. It is still the case that, as Mr. Macaulay has told us, an inquiry into a row at Covent Garden would ensure fuller benches in the House than the most important subject connected with India. The debate of June, 1850, was one signal instance of it, and I will now give another. There never was a more "wicked war" and a more wholly unjustifiable measure than our invasion of Afghanistan; it is difficult to reckon the number of millions which it has added, immediately and by its consequences, to the debt of India, and it was plunged into in spite of the most energetic remonstrances and warnings, and explanations of its impolicy, by all those who were competent to offer an opinion on the matter. Nevertheless, Parliament hardly made a pretence of calling to account the irresponsible Minister who said "I did it," and who coolly avowed many years afterwards that it was "a folly if not a crime," and the presentation of a Blue-book, which Captain Kaye has since gibbeted as the grossest specimen of "official lying" that ever insulted a country, at once satisfied the House of Commons.

Now, as this case only came out by accident, we are not to wonder how many millions have been added to the debt of India,

by the "follies if not crimes" of our irresponsible Ministers, which have not come out? and, what is still more important, *how many will be added hereafter?* For every irresponsible Minister knows he has nothing to fear from Parliament; and as the ultimate burthen of every "folly if not a crime" falls on the back of the miserable ryots, nobody cares and nobody complains to any purpose in England.

However, there is a time for all things, and this system of abuse has had its day; and though I would rather urge reform on higher grounds than those of mere self-interest, I must remark that in such a state of the finances and resources of India as those I have described, something must be done, and done at once, if we mean to avert a catastrophe. There is reason to believe that the financial state of our Indian empire is really much worse than the studiously mystified and maimed financial report of the Blue-book enables us to prove; but even from the imperfect data furnished by the authorities, any one may see that a crisis is at length approaching, and that our present system of Indian administration must be leading to some fearful tragedy. I will therefore remind the reader of a few of the reforms most urgently required in the present system. 1st. The abolition of the sham "double Government," which, by enabling the home authorities to evade responsibility, ensures every kind of abuse; and at the same time the abolition of a private monopoly of patronage belonging to the nation. 2nd. The abolition of that system of minute recordation, which wastes an enormous amount of time and money, clogs and impedes every part of the machinery of administration, reduces the home authorities under the power of a bureaucracy, because they have not time to read shiploads of papers, and after all, never prevents, or did prevent, one single act of injustice. 3rd. An uniform system of detailed accounts from every Presidency; instead of the present system of accounts, "made up in a way to deceive the public," by putting down *different* receipts and charges in the separate Presidencies, under *the same* heads; by sometimes omitting heavy charges altogether; and generally omitting the detail of receipts and charges (so as to leave it impossible to find out the cause of their rise or decline, or their future prospects);

and by the mystifications noticed at page 124, and Appendix C. 4th. The gradual abolition (as recommended in Mr. Elphinstone's evidence, March 25th, 1830) of an extravagantly paid and frequently inefficient "Covenanted Civil Service," by the admission of the natives to all appointments for which they are qualified. 5th. An equitable assessment of the land-tax, and a distinct restriction of the Government demand to a *tax*, debarring the Government from ever again claiming the property or *rent* of land. 6th. The expenditure by the local Governments of 5 per cent. of the land-revenue on public works and education. 7th. The restoration of the indigenous local self-government, and judicial arbitration system of the natives. 8th. The regular publication of statistical information, and reports on matters connected with civil administration, and the progress of cultivation and commerce in India—in a word, a system of publicity instead of a system of secrecy. 9th. The centralisation of political, and decentralisation of administrative power in India.—At present we do the very reverse of this: we allow a political power to the local Governments, which enables them to involve us in a Coorg war, a Khutputt case at Baroda, &c. &c.; and we refuse them sufficient administrative power to build a bridge or a jetty.

With regard to this last reform, I must remind the reader once more, that India is an empire as large as Europe, containing ancient kingdoms as large as France, Italy, or Austria, and peopled by many races of men, differing, not only in languages, institutions, and characters, but in the nature of their soils and climates, and their consequent occupations. Therefore, a central Bureaucracy in London, or even at Calcutta, can no more pay due attention to the local wants of the 150 millions of inhabitants spread over our vast territories of India, than a Bureaucracy at St. Petersburg could understand or attend to the local wants of Geneva or Naples.

I therefore propose to reform the Home Government by cutting away the Bureaucracy, and substituting an efficient council for the effete East India Company, and making the Indian Minister responsible to Parliament.

Less than this will not do; but this is merely a practical reform of proved causes of mal-administration: it does not pretend to be a sudden cure for their consequences. I am afraid the old

grievances of India cannot be cured in a day by any legislative enactment, nor if I could get the same Parliamentary representation for India that existed seventy years ago, should I expect to see any inveterate grievance immediately redressed. For instance, supposing my plan were adopted, and the Minister were compelled to give a full annual communication of Indian affairs, then the way would probably be this: some friend of India would go to a member of Parliament and say, "When the Minister makes his statement, see what he says on a particular subject, and then ask him such and such questions, or state such and such facts." Well, the member of Parliament would play his part, and the official man, having had due notice, would make a most satisfactory reply, and the House, who were beginning to feel uncomfortable, would be glad to see the complaint so effectually disposed of. However, next session the complaint would reappear, with a complete exposure of any official fraud and sophistry by which it had been met the year before, with a larger array of facts in its support, with more members knowing the circumstances of the case, with the advantage perhaps of having appealed to the press in the interval, and it appears by one of my authorities that the "Times" has shown its readiness to open its columns to any well authenticated case of Indian grievance; and let any one imagine this going on, not for one or two, but for five, or six, or seven years, with a heavier weight of proof thrown into the discussion every year, and the ripple gradually widening and circling round the public, and then say whether it is not probable that, under such circumstances, an Indian grievance would be redressed in a few years.

But it would be a new life for India to have the chance of getting a grievance redressed in a few years! Under the present system every evil principle of administration is allowed to work itself fairly out, and exhaust all the poison in its nature, before there is any change, so that when at last necessity enforces a change, the mischief done is irreparable. And meanwhile, it is utterly useless to appeal to the Bureaucracy, for the atmosphere of office seems to harden their hearts and render their minds callous to impressions from without, till it changes their very



nature; as certain springs have the property of petrifying bits of wood that fall into their water.

I emphatically repeat that no reform is more urgently required than this one of giving *by word of mouth* a periodical supply of information on all subjects connected with our Eastern policy to the House of Commons. Let the Minister be compelled to give an account of his stewardship, to give a detailed statement of Indian affairs once a year, and members of Parliament would again become competent to discuss the subject; and again they would discuss it, again the Government would become responsible, and the grievances of the natives would be redressed, simply because men were informed of them.

I will appeal to human nature and to our every-day experience for proof of what I say. Why have I written this book—why have I spoken warmly (perhaps too warmly, but my heart has burned within me to see the injury to India and the peril to England)—why have I taken so much trouble about this question? because I was informed of the facts, and other men were not. And in moral qualities I have always observed that the mass of mankind were exactly like myself, neither better nor worse. I have always seen that any gross outrage on common sense and justice, particularly against their own interests, shocked other men just as it did me, when they found it out. And though it may please certain novelists to describe us as purely selfish beings, that is not a true portrait of human nature; there is a divine spark at the bottom of every man's heart which will leap into life when it is properly appealed to; and it is, appealed to, every day, among us, in private and in public, in the press and the Parliament, and in no country is it more prompt to answer the appeal.

What is the difference between a member of Parliament who shows "not merely indifference to, but feelings of impatience and disgust at," the performance of a sacred duty to India, and myself? It is that he has not information and I have. Give him information and he will be as warm for justice to India as I am, for our nature is exactly the same.

Moreover look at our daily experience. What is the Parliament, and the press, and the system which draws such a degree of

popular reverence and attachment to our institutions, as ensured sweet calm in England, when a hurricane raged over the rest of Europe? Ay! it made our isle a charmed spot where the demon of revolutions could not set his foot; and it procures a visible respect for the law in this nation which astonished the foreigners who visited our Exhibition, more than anything else they saw. What is all this but a system of representation? of representing to the Legislature the wants, and wishes, and claims, and grievances of the people? of informing the Legislature what they feel, and suffer, and hope from its sympathy, or expect from its justice? And this system is so loved by the people, and so universally admired and envied by foreigners, because it gives the people a guarantee that they shall be governed by equal laws, and that their grievances shall be redressed. Not that it prevents grievances! no system ever did, or could, or ever will do so.

But now see the cruel injustice we are doing to India! We do not find it too much for ourselves to have a Parliament sitting for months every year, to correct and extend our legislation and suit it to our social changes; to have besides the most perfect representation of all our complaints and desires in the press which it is possible to conceive; and with all this to watch vigilantly the responsibility of every depositary of power amongst us, as our only security against official tyranny, neglect, incompetency, and plunder; and, after all, we prove many serious grievances, and the reader of the public journals for the last year alone is familiar with much deserved blame of every department of our Administration, of the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, the Horse Guards, the Admiralty, the Customs, &c.

Can we then affect to believe that a sham inquiry once in twenty years, with almost total neglect in the interval, is sufficient to redress the grievances of India? Can we pretend to think that the despotic administration of 150 millions of men, conducted at a distance of many thousand miles away from us, by a few hundred foreigners, having little intercourse with the natives and no permanent stake in their country, and directed by irresponsible home authorities, who betray the utmost anxiety to conceal the truth from the public, can we pretend to think that such an

Administration has done or is doing justice to the people of India, without being checked by a particle of anything like political representation? Would not any man who had studied history or human nature, divine all the injury to the natives which I have described, from merely knowing the conditions of our irresponsible Indian Government?

Let the reader conceive any one English question—parliamentary reform, legal reform, free trade, any one of them—being turned over to the Ministry of the day and their successors for twenty years, to give or withhold, at their pleasure, without hearing one word of explanation, or remonstrance, or information of our interest in the matter, and our sufferings for want of a legislative remedy. Would not this seem monstrous in our own case? Why then do we unscrupulously apply it to India? Why do we treat, not one, but all, of her vital questions and dearest interests in a manner which seems monstrous when applied to ourselves?

Oh, my countrymen! do not continue this inhuman system. Do not consign India to an unfeeling despotism for another term of years, and coldly tell her “*abi in pace*,” as the Inquisition used to say in sending its victims back to the torture, when you know it must lead to cruel neglect and mal-administration. It is only by an unheard-of abuse, repugnant alike to our principles, and customs, and institutions, and to all our English notions of what is right, that this Indian Government has become irresponsible; and England is exposed to great and increasing peril while it is allowed to remain so.

I shall be met, I know, by the old argument that the Legislature cannot make any change because Indian reformers do not agree among themselves upon what ought to be done. But is this argument really serious? Why men must have remained savages ever since the creation of the world, if nothing had ever been done till all men were agreed upon what ought to be done. The argument is as much as to say there shall be no progress until a condition is complied with, which is notoriously impossible. Besides, I apprehend that it is not merely the function of legislators to redress grievances, but their duty to find out the means of doing so. There is not the same obligation on a private

person who proves the grievance; he is only one of the patients; a legislator is the state physician; and if it is not the business of members of Parliament to know and apply the proper cure for political grievances, then what is their business? Conceive the doctor of a consumptive hospital telling his patients, "My poor friends, one of you thinks one thing would be good for his case, and another fancies something else; now I know how to cure your disease, because it is my profession to understand it, and therefore do I hold the honourable appointment of your medical man; nevertheless as your own opinions about your treatment differ, I beg you will excuse me from giving you any prescription at all." Should we not think that a doctor who held this language had gone out of his mind? Yet it is just the same thing for our legislators to say they cannot make any change because Indian reformers do not agree about what ought to be done.

After all, if Indian reformers do not agree about the remedy, they all agree about the great abuse of the Indian Government, viz., its want of Parliamentary responsibility. Every independent writer on India, for the last fifty years, has emphatically denounced this abuse, and therefore it is the duty of the Legislature to find a remedy for it. If members of Parliament cannot fulfil this duty, they are not fit for the dignified positions they occupy; if they will not fulfil it, their refusal will lead to fatal results in India, long before another Charter is over. This is the opinion of every eminent man of long experience in that country, whom I have had the honour to know, and it is worth the serious consideration of the British public.

And now I have done what I could to assist a righteous cause; and in this crisis of the Charter, when the future destiny of England is depending upon her choice of a policy towards her Eastern Empire, I expect that you too, reader, will do your duty—and may the Almighty Disposer of events, who has hitherto signally protected and blessed us . . . ay! has He not blessed us? are not the signs of His favour visible on every side? is it not written on our Houses of Parliament, and our Protestant churches? on the glories of our literature, and arts, and sciences? on the triumphs of our industry and invention? on the very

look of an Englishman? and is it not an ungrateful return for His bounty to abuse that power over 150 millions of our fellow creatures which He has given us in the East? may it not provoke Him to punish an ungrateful race, and to cut off the inheritance of His blessings from the sons of those who turn His benefits against Him? . . . yet now, while the fate of two Empires is trembling in the balance, even now may His mercy once more lighten upon us, and may He inspire the Great Council of the nation to frame such a legislative measure, as shall give justice to India; and thereby secure the safety and honour of England!

## APPENDIX A.

ABSTRACT of the Expenditure on Public Works in Bengal and the North-West Provinces, for the ten years ending 1848-49, as contained in the Blue Book printed by order of the House of Commons, August 1, 1851.

Classification of Works.	Expenditure in the N W. Provinces	Expenditure in Bengal	Total Expenditure.
On constructing, improving, and repairing roads . . .	995,857	7,416,659	8,412,516
Ditto, ditto, bridges . . .	339,076	696,914	1,035,990
Total for roads and bridges .	1,334,933	8,113,573	*9,448,506
On canals and embankments, and works of irrigation .	4,758,394	433,895	†5,192,289
Total for roads, bridges, canals, embankments, and works of irrigation	6,093,327	8,547,468	‡14,640,795
On repairs and construction of civil buildings .	632,635	3,829,425	3,082,060
Total expenditure by amount stated in the Blue Book .	6,725,962	11,876,893	18,602,855

Mean of annual gross revenue for the ten years, &c., rupees 14,69,56,709, or 14,695,870*l*.

Mean of annual net revenue for the ten years, &c., rupees 11,87,82,243, or 11,878,224.

\* Mean of expenditure on roads and bridges for the ten years, &c., rupees 9,44,850 or 94,485*l*.—showing that less than three quarters of one per cent. of the gross revenue, that is, less than 110,218*l*., was expended on roads and bridges.

† Mean of expenditure on canals, embankments, and works of irrigation, for the ten years, &c., rupees, 5,19,228, or 51,922*l*.—showing that less than the half of one per cent. of the gross revenue, that is, less than 73,479*l*., was expended on canals, embankments, and works of irrigation.

‡ Mean of expenditure on roads, bridges, canals, embankments, and works of irrigation, for the ten years, &c., rupees, 14,64,079, or 146,407*l*.—showing that less than one and a quarter per cent. of the net revenue, or less than 148,477*l*., was expended altogether on public works other than civil buildings.

With the above statement before him, let the reader remember the proofs given in the Madras Engineer's letter, that public works in India produce more wealth both to the Government and the people than any gold mine has been known to produce.

## APPENDIX B.

### LAND REVENUE.

It is difficult to draw any conclusion as to the resources of the people from the produce of the land tax, as the receipts are continually swelled by lapses and resumptions, which augment the temporary revenue by weeding out the capitalists among the landowners; and by annexations, which are often not a gain but a loss to the general treasury; for instance, p. 468, par. 65, 66, states that Sattarah, recently annexed, is a loss to the finances of the state, though a gain to the land revenue of nearly 20 lacs! It requires therefore a knowledge of the particular items of this branch of revenue to draw any certain conclusion from it, and these particulars are not given in any public document. I will however state some general results, and add a few comments upon them.

*Bengal.*—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual falling off in the last four years of Rs. 3,47,616.

*Agra.*—(Old territory, excluding the Sutej annexations.) The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual falling off in the last four years of Rs. 3,25,163.

*Bombay.*—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual falling off\* in the last four years of Rs. 1,47,265.

*Madras.*—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an annual increase† in the last four years of Rs. 24,21,306.

\* I have deducted the increased revenue charges, p. 451, par. 11, because the Blue Book misstates the case as to the *increase* of these revenue charges. The fact is, that "costs of collection" have been put down in the receipts of the Bombay land revenue of late years, which were not previously included in them. It is another proof of the want of detailed items of receipts and charges.

† The Blue Book states, p. 453, par. 16, that a portion of this increase is a set-off against a loss of 28 lacs, by the repeal of the "transit duties;" which must be the case, as these duties were far more inquisitorial and destructive of industry in Madras than anywhere else. However, on making application to the India House, to know the particulars of the Madras increase, I received information that the greater part of it was due to lapses and resumptions, quite independent of the ordinary land revenue of the Presidency. It is therefore impossible to arrive at any certain financial conclusion from the published accounts of the land-tax, and it will require full particulars of the receipts and charges to show the prospects of the Indian Exchequer, and the real condition of the people.

## SALT REVENUE.

The Blue Book states, pp. 454—456, pars. 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, that owing to the large importation of salt since the reduction of the duty, the receipts of the Government salt monopoly are rapidly declining, and it estimates the average annual decreased receipt \* at 23 lacs in Bengal, 2 lacs in Madras, and 2 lacs in Bombay.

## CUSTOMS REVENUE.

These receipts exhibit a falling off at one Presidency, from the abolition of the transit duties, and a still larger increase in others from the progressive importation of salt, but with a most unsatisfactory result on the whole, which will require some comments.

*Bengal*.—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual increase in the last four years of Rs. 12,34,153.

*Agra*.—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual increase in the last four years of Rs. 10,90,532.

*Madras*.—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual falling off in the last four years of Rs. 18,34,695.

*Bombay*.—The four years ending 1849-50, in comparison with the four years ending 1845-6, exhibit an average annual falling off in the last four years of Rs. 6,95,586.

The total falling off on the receipts of the above Presidencies, is Rs. 2,05,596.

I cannot but regard this result as a very bad symptom, and the index of a decline in the tax-paying powers of the people; for the annually increasing item of salt forms considerably more than half of the customs receipts of Bengal, and four-fifths of those of Agra; therefore, excepting the salt, I infer from the above result a decided and marked decline in the commerce of the natives in other articles; and this conclusion is strongly confirmed by the following view of the exports and imports.

## IMPORTS.

Comparative statement of the value of merchandise imported into

\* The cheapness of this necessary of life is indispensable to the health of the people, whatever it may be to the Government; and even now, the natives, who live far more on vegetable diet than Europeans do, suffer severely in the interior of the country from the high price of salt.



the Presidencies of British India, from the United Kingdom and other countries, from the four years ending 1845-6 and 1849-50.

		From the United Kingdom Rs.	From other Countries Rs.
Bengal,	Average annual value during the four years ending 1845-6 . . . . .	26,13,15,728	10,13,13,728
Madras,			
Bombay,			
Bengal,	Average annual value during the four years ending 1849-50 . . . . .	25,30,17,240	10,83,72,503
Madras,			
Bombay,			

Showing a falling off in the value of the imports from the United Kingdom during the last four years of Rs. 82,98,488, and an increase of those of other countries of Rs. 70,58,775.

#### EXPORTS.

Comparative statement of the value of merchandise exported from the Presidencies of British India, to the United Kingdom and other countries, for the four years ending 1845-6 and 1849-50.

		To the United Kingdom Rs.	To other Countries Rs.
Bengal,	Average annual value during the four years ending 1845-6 . . . . .	27,48,06,571	36,94,35,307
Madras,			
Bombay,			
Bengal,	Average annual value during the four years ending 1849-50 . . . . .	25,41,39,431	36,65,46,925
Madras,			
Bombay,			

Showing a falling off in the value of the exports to the United Kingdom during the last four years of Rs. 2,06,67,140, and a falling off in those to other countries of Rs. 28,88,382.

In this state of the resources of the Government and the people, the debt goes on increasing, and the cause of debt, viz., territorial aggrandisement, goes on *pari passu*. Mr. Campbell published a book last year, stating, p. 148, that we had "at last reached the limit of and become supreme in *all* India." We have the whole country in our power to do as we will with, and we have a natural line of circumvallation dividing it from the rest of the world." Hardly was the book published before the Government began a Burmese war—a war for which I can only conceive two even rational motives, that is, either the pressure of those private interests which seek for employment and promotion; or else the old policy of statesmen, as old as the time of Pericles, plunging into a war to hide the embarrassment of their accounts by war charges. If this last motive be the true one, the Burmese war will be a dear way of passing the Indian accounts, for it is likely to prove quite as expensive as the last war, which in two years

added thirteen millions and a half to the debt;\* and it will end as usual by annexation, and leave us with the certainty of future hostilities, aggrandisement, and debt, on a new and very exposed frontier, where we have already sown the seeds of another war by our differences with Siam in 1850. The same system is pursued on the other side of India. Before the Affghanistan war the highest authorities opposed it,† but in vain. Before the Caubul disaster it was pointed out, not only privately to the ministry, but to the nation,‡ that we possessed an impregnable frontier on the north-west, in the line from Loodianah to the sea; but in vain. The system prevailed, the line was passed, gradually Scinde, the Sutlej territories, and the Punjaub were annexed, and thus since 1839, about sixteen millions and a half were added to the debt,§ about 100,000 men to the standing army,|| with a corresponding increase in the export of stores,¶ the dead weight at home and abroad,\*\* the charges for the navy, &c.;†† and at the present day the Indian press cries out, that the Governor-General can only be waiting for the conclusion of the Burmese war, to commence offensive operations against the Affghans. Under these circumstances, I derive no consolation from the argument I often hear, that the debt of India is little more than two years' income, and good management would soon raise the revenues of the country so enormously that the debt would cease to be formidable. Let me suggest to the reader a parallel case in private life. Suppose a particular individual was on the road to ruin, and all advice, information, and remonstrance were thrown away upon him, although his failure would involve the reader's fortune, would it console the reader to be told that if this individual only understood his business, and would manage it prudently, he need not become bankrupt? I am inclined to think not: yet it is precisely the same case with the irresponsible administration of India. The permanent resources of the empire are wholly unable to meet the charge of the present debt, and yet the Government does not develope the country's means of production, but trusts to a merely gambling illicit source of income, for one-fifth of its gross revenue; in spite of the great probability of seeing it suddenly cut off. At the same time as the Government gets credit because England is the real security for Indian loans, it makes up any deficit by borrowing more capital, and perseveres in that policy of aggrandisement, which causes a progressive increase of the debt. Of course, I cannot tell how long such a system may go on, but anybody can tell how it must end.

\* Blue Book, 1852, p. 485, par. 102.

† Kaye's Affghanistan, vol. i. p. 363.

‡ Article in the Indian News of Oct. 1841, on "the North-Western Dilemma."

§ Blue Book, p. 485, par. 108.

|| Ib. 490, 499.

¶ Ib. 276, 279.

\*\* Ib. 479, 485, 486, par. 96. (I find no account in the Blue Book of 1852

pensions to superannuated native soldiers.) †† Ib. p. 429, 723, 474 to 477.

## APPENDIX C.

It happens, by an exception to the rule, that the conqueror of Scinde has fallen out with the Court of Directors, and without noticing the cause of their quarrel, the revenge of the Bureaucracy is something so peculiar and so characteristic of the class, that I must direct public attention to it.

Because Sir Charles Napier is a foo, every charge incurred by annexing Scinde is brought prominently forward, and I think with exaggeration, and the financial result of his annexation is exhibited as a heavy annual excess of charge on the Indian revenue. Because Lords Hardinge and Dalhousie are friends, the bulk of the charges incurred by their annexations, are literally altogether suppressed, the receipts are put prominently forward, and the financial result of annexing the Punjaub is exhibited as a surplus. For instance, p. 467, the following six items, military charges, extraordinary military charges, ditto war charges, commissariat charges, extraordinary military charges, arrears of commissariat, &c., are credited against Scinde, since the date of annexation, amounting in round numbers to the sum of three millions sterling. On the opposite page not one of these items is inserted in the Punjaub accounts, and so completely is every charge for the Punjaub force suppressed, that we could not even trace its existence without ransacking the Blue Book, till we find a "distribution return," p. 410, which lets out that, besides local and irregular corps, there are 34,000 regular troops in the Punjaub, including 5,765 Europeans. Again, p. 448, Scinde is accused of having added heavily to the debt, which is proved, p. 446, by the increase of the interest of the debt contemporary with the annexation of Scinde. But by the same rule, when I find at p. 479, an enormous increase of the interest of the debt contemporary with the annexations of Lords Hardinge and Dalhousie, I feel bound to accuse these annexations of having been a much greater annual excess of charge on the Indian revenues than the annexation of Sir Charles Napier, notwithstanding that "things are made pleasant" for Lord Dalhousie at p. 466, by proving the Punjaub a *surplus*!

The above is an average specimen of the honesty of Indian Blue Books, and unless the public agree with Hudibras, that

"Surely the pleasure is as great  
In being cheated as to cheat,"

I hope they will not tolerate the system of mystification any longer.

## INDIA REFORM SOCIETY.

ON Saturday, the 12th of March, a Meeting of the Friends of India was held in Charles Street, St. James's Square, with a view of bringing public opinion to bear on the Imperial Parliament in the case of India, so as to obtain due attention to the complaints and claims of the inhabitants of that vast empire. H. D. Seymour, Esq., M.P., having been called to the chair, the following Resolutions were agreed to by the Meeting :—

1. That the character of the alterations to be effected in the constitution of our Indian Government at the termination of the East India Company's Charter Act, on the 30th of April, 1854, is a question which demands the most ample and serious consideration.

2. That although Committees of both Houses of Parliament have been appointed, in conformity with the practice on each preceding renewal of the Charter Act, for the purpose of investigating the nature and the results of our Indian Administration, those Committees have been appointed on the present occasion at a period so much later than usual, that the interval of time remaining before the expiration of the existing powers of the East India Company is too short to permit the possibility of collecting such evidence as would show what alterations are required in our Indian Government.

3 That the inquiry now being prosecuted by Committees of the legislature will be altogether unsatisfactory if it be confined to the evidence of officials and of servants of the East India Company, and conducted and terminated without reference to the petitions and wishes of the more intelligent of the natives of India.

4. That it is the duty of the friends of India to insist upon a temporary Act to continue the present Government of India for a period not exceeding three years, so that time may be given for such full inquiry and deliberation as will enable Parliament within that

period to legislate permanently for the future administration of our Indian Empire.

5. That in order to obtain such a measure, this Meeting constitutes itself an "India Reform Society," and names the undermentioned gentlemen as a Committee.

T. BARNES, Esq., M.P.	T. HUNT, Esq.
J. BELL, Esq., M.P.	E. J. HUTCHINS, Esq., M.P.
W. BIGGS, Esq., M.P.	P. F. C. JOHNSTONE, Esq.
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M. G. FIELDEN, Esq., M.P.	J. G. PHILLIMORE, Esq., M.P.
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G. HADFIELD, Esq., M.P.	J. SULLIVAN, Esq.
W. HARCOURT, Esq.	G. THOMPSON, Esq., M.P.
L. HEYWORTH, Esq., M.P.	F. WARREN, Esq.
C. HINDLEY, Esq., M.P.	J. A. WISE, Esq., M.P.

Correspondence on all matters connected with the Society to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, by whom subscriptions will be received in aid of its object.

JOHN DICKINSON, Jun., *Hon. Sec.*

Committee Rooms, Clarence Chambers, 12, Haymarket,

April 12th, 1853

# INDIAN STATISTICS,

FROM REPORT ON INDIAN TERRITORIES FOR 1852.

	Area.	Population.
British States, square miles . . . . .	677,752 . . . . .	99,409,902*
Native States ditto . . . . .	690,361 . . . . .	52,359,051
Grand Total . . . . .	1,368,113 . . . . .	151,768,953

## REVENUES AND CHARGES OF INDIA

	Total Revenues	Charges in India	Payments in England
1834-35 . . . . .	£18,652,887	£16,684,496	£2,162,868
1850-51 (estimated) . . . . .	25,540,529	23,502,052	2,717,186
	Total Charges.	Surplus	Deficit
1834-35 . . . . .	£18,847,364	—	£194,477
1850-51 (estimated) . . . . .	26,219,238	—	678,709

## INDIAN DEBT

	Total Indian Debt	Home Bond Debt.	Grand Total
Amount of Debt on April 30, 1834 . . . . .	£35,463,483	£3,523,237	£38,986,720
Estimate of ditto for 1851 . . . . .	47,877,734	3,899,500	51,777,234

## CUSTOMS REVENUE

For 1834-35, Net Produce . . . . .	£1,317,862
Estimate for 1850-51 . . . . .	1,331,179

## MILITARY FORCE.

	Europeans.	Natives.	Grand Total
1835 . . . . .	30,822	152,938	183,760
1851 . . . . .	49,408	240,121	289,529

## INCREASE OF REVENUE FROM OPIUM TRADE SINCE 1841-42 \*

### OPIUM NETT RECEIPTS.

1841-42	1842-43.	1843 44.	1844-45	1845-46
£955,093.	£1,478,046.	£1,898,274.	£2,044,953.	£2,628,140.
1846-47	1847-48.	1848-49	1849-50	Estimate, 1850-51
£2,705,813.	£1,559,423.	£2,667,902.	£3,309,637.	£2,700,662.

\* "It is scarcely necessary to observe how opportune this great source of increase has proved towards defraying the extraordinary expenditure of India in the last few years. Had the net receipts from opium continued at their average rate during the fifteen years prior to 1842-43, instead of being augmented to the extent already stated, your Government must have borrowed seven crores (millions sterling) more than it has done to supply the annual deficiency. In a financial point of view the prosperity of the opium trade has therefore been most seasonable and serviceable to the interests of India. It should nevertheless be regarded, from the many contingencies to which it is liable, rather as an auxiliary to your permanent resources than a certain source of revenue which can be safely relied on."—*Financial Letter of the Court of Directors, dated October 25th, 1848.*

LONDON:  
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS

# INDIA REFORM

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No. VII.

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## INDIA WRONGS WITHOUT A REMEDY

ILLUSTRATED BY

1. THE CASE OF THE CARNATIC STIPENDIARIES.
2. THE CASE OF THE DEPOSED RAJAH OF SATTARAH'S  
PRIVATE PROPERTY.
3. THE CASE OF THE PARSEE MERCHANTS.
4. THE CASE OF THE EX-RAJAH OF COORG

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LONDON:

SAUNDERS & STANFORD, 6, CHARING CROSS.

MANCHESTER:

SIMMS AND DINHAM.

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*Price Threepence.*



# INDIA REFORM

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1.—GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SINCE 1834.

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2.—THE FINANCES OF INDIA.

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3.—NOTES ON INDIA,

By Dr. BUIST, OF BOMBAY.

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4.—THE NATIVE STATES OF INDIA.

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5.—AN EXTRACT FROM MILL'S HISTORY  
ON THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT;

AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE  
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE, BY J. SULLIVAN, ESQ.

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6.—INDIA UNDER A BUREAUCRACY.

By J. DICKINSON, JUN., M.R.A.S. F.R.G.S.

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*Preparing for publication.*

8.—PUBLIC WORKS.

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9.—MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

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10.—NATURE OF THE INDIA QUESTION,  
AND OF THE EVIDENCE UPON IT.

---

11.—CONDITION OF THE SUBJECTS OF  
THE NATIVE PRINCES  
BEFORE THE PERIOD OF BRITISH SUPREMACY.

# INDIA REFORM.

## INDIA WRONGS WITHOUT A REMEDY.

THE object of this Tract is to give a few specimens of a large class of cases of Wrong and Injustice perpetrated, either directly and through its own acts, by the Indian Government, or indirectly and by its inactivity, for which neither the law of the Predominant Power nor the practice of its Administration as it now stands, has provided a remedy or a tribunal. The cases that follow have not, however, been selected because of their special gravity and scandal, but because they are instances in which the Claimants, either in person or by their agents, are now in England, soliciting and claiming that redress which they have long sought for in vain in India.

In the first case, the Wrong complained of is a violation of a Treaty to the ruin and starvation of the descendants of a Royal House, through which our own fortunes in Southern India were first advanced—a Treaty, too, of which we are still in full and profitable enjoyment. In the second, the injury done is the confiscation of private property to the extent of £300,000, the preservation of which was solemnly promised by the Bombay Government and its agents. In the third case, British subjects complain of their Government allowing a Native Prince to defraud them of large sums of money, of which it had the benefit. And in the fourth, a deposed Prince asserts that the Indian Government has repudiated, to his injury, that part of their public debt in which his private fortune was invested. Now in not one of these four cases is there at present any legal machinery by which the Indian Government can be made to entertain these complaints, by which the question of injury or no injury can be ascertained and decided, by which the amount of redress and compensation, if due, can be assessed. And this, it is submitted, is a state of things,

incompatible with the honour of the British Crown, inconsistent with the character of the British Nation, discreditable to the sacred cause of justice, and encouraging to that want of responsibility which is the vice of our Indian system.

That system is indeed the object of anticipatory and premature laudation by Lord John Russell.\* Speaking of the opposition of Mr. Fox to Mr. Pitt's India Bill in 1783, his Lordship remarks, and the importance of Lord John's opinion at the present moment will justify and excuse the length of the quotation :—

“ It was easy for Mr. Fox, with his vast powers of reasoning long exercised on this subject, to prove that these two authorities [the Court of Directors and the Board of Control] must be always in conflict; that, with two supreme heads confronted, confusion must ensue, and that the abuses of the Indian Government must be perpetuated under so strange and anomalous a system.

“ The experience of seventy years, however, has blunted arguments which could not be logically refuted. The real supremacy of the Ministers of the Crown, usually kept in the background, but always ready to be exerted, has kept in check the administration of the Company, and placed the affairs of India under that guarantee of ministerial responsibility by which all things in Great Britain are ordered and controlled. The Directors of the East India Company have not ventured to connive at acts which a Minister of the Crown would not sanction; and a Minister of the Crown would not sanction acts which he could not defend in Parliament. Thus silently, but effectually, the spirit of the British Constitution has pervaded India, and the most absolute despotism has been qualified and tempered by the genius of representative government.

“ In giving to the India Bill of Mr. Pitt, however, all the credit which can possibly be due to it, we must not lose sight of another and more powerful cause of the improvement which has taken place in the morality of our Governors of India. Lord Clive and Mr. Hastings, invested with an irregular power; contending every month for the existence of a British settlement, without any military means of adequate proportion; sought by complicated intrigue, by insincere alliances, by acts of violence at one moment, and of treachery at

\* *Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox. By Lord John Russell.*

another, to rear and consolidate a sovereignty of London merchants. In the words of Erskine they sought 'to support an empire, which Heaven never gave, by means which it never can sanction.'

"This course of cupidity and fraud, of robbery and oppression, was brought to a close by the impeachment of Warren Hastings. The mind of Mr. Burke comprehended the vast extent of the question, and his genius animated the heavy mass of materials which his industry had enabled him to master. He enlisted in this cause the powerful reasoning of Fox and the brilliant fancy of Sheridan. After a time he succeeded in gaining the support of Mr. Pitt, and armed against the former Governor of India the great battery of parliamentary impeachment. Whether the Minister was convinced by the evidence which threw so full a light on the misdeeds of Warren Hastings, or whether he was glad to protect himself from the ambition of a rival by acceding to a prosecution against him, the effect was no less certain. For years Mr. Burke persevered in his great task. Neither the dilatory plea of a dissolution of Parliament, nor the appalling earthquake of the French revolution (to none more appalling than to him), ever distracted his attention from his great Indian enterprise. The speeches delivered by him in Westminster-hall are great monuments of industry and eloquence: they surpass in power those of Cicero when denouncing the crimes of Verres. Finally, although the impeachment ended in an acquittal, its results were memorable and beneficial. Never has the great object of punishment, the prevention of crime, been attained more completely than by this trial. The Lords and Commons of England, assembled in Westminster-hall, in the presence of the judges, the bar, the aristocracy, and the public, heard the whole record of Indian transactions unrolled before them, and the acts of our agents brought to the test of English law and Christian morality. No palliation, no plea of necessity could alter the character of those acts; and no man who could aspire to civil or judicial authority in India would ever dare to repeat conduct which during seven years of a solemn process, before an august tribunal, had been denounced as wicked, oppressive, perfidious, rapacious, and cruel. The conscience of mankind was brought in presence of negotiations, treaties, usurpations, conquests, veiled in the haze of an obscure distance, and covered by a jungle of strange manners and uncouth phraseology. The sentence was pronounced, not by the Peers, but by the universal opinion of right and wrong. Mr. Hastings was acquitted, but tyranny, deceit, and injus-

tice were condemned. India was saved from abominations disgraceful to the English name, and the hands of Cornwallis, Minto, Bentinck, and Auckland, have swayed an empire where Chyrt Sing was despoiled and Nuncomar was executed."

How far "the most absolute despotism" has really and truly "been qualified and tempered by the genius of representative government" during the last twenty years, will, of course, be doubted by those who regard the Afghan war as a crime, the acquisition of Scinde as a stupid injustice, the conquest of the Punjaub as a doubtful policy, and the Burmese war as an abomination,—will be denied by those who have witnessed a gradual deterioration in the condition of the people of India, who know the actual state of the administration of justice in India, and who have seen the gentry disappear, and individual wealth diminish. The improved tone of morality in the English mind and character during the last seventy years, rather than "the genius of representative government," which, exhausted by the mighty efforts it made during Hastings' impeachment, has never been able since to rouse itself to continued and systematic attention to the affairs of India—this improved tone of morality at home and the more complete organization of the internal government of India itself have, no doubt, corrected to some extent the larger faults of the Indian Government. But even these influences and agencies have failed to prevent the Company's Government perpetrating acts of wrong which would not be endured here in England.

Sir Robert Peel's large and disinterested vision long ago saw that in this respect our Indian "despotism" required some better correctives than the mere "genius of representative government;" he saw that it needed the substance of law rather than the mere reflex of liberal institutions from home; and that power so great ought, in its application to individuals, to be made subject and responsible to the examination and controul of independent judicial authority. So long ago as 1833, that great man (whose loss India will now feel as England has felt it), advocated the establishment of some

tribunal to decide in those personal questions on which the Indian Government now does as it pleases, uncontrolled by Parliament.

In England there is, the law assures us, no Wrong without a Remedy; in India, the following examples will illustrate, there is a large class of Wrongs, for which there is not even the pretence of Remedy. Here, in extreme cases the subject can prosecute his claims on the Queen's Government by a Writ of Right. There the subject's only hope are letters and remonstrances, sometimes unanswered, almost universally unheeded. Redress in India for this class of Injustice is not, therefore, a right to which the subject is entitled, but a favour to be reached by influence and solicitation. Thus the "despotism" of the Government and the servility of the people are promoted; and the suitors tired and worn out by the fruitless prosecution of their cases in India, turn to England, where, believing Justice to be found, they only experience disappointment. With these remarks, the reader will be better able in 1853 to appreciate in the following instances the want of such a Tribunal as Sir Robert Peel deemed necessary in 1833.

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## HOW THE COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT USES NATIVE STIPENDIARIES.

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Of all countries of Southern India, the Carnatic is most intimately connected with the early progress of our dominion and with the growth of our empire. The Company's earliest settlement, Fort St. David, was situated in this kingdom, and its position below the Ghauts, on the coast of Coromandel, brought us at once into connexion with its Mahomedan rulers. There we were met by, there we resisted, and thence we finally expelled French influence. It was our success in the Carnatic that cost Dupleix his fortune, and Lally his life. At its capital, Arcot, Clive won his youthful fame, and by Lawrence and him our adopted pretender

to its throne, Mahomed Ali, was established as Nabob. It was in the Carnatic, that Hyder Ali took such terrible vengeance on its unhappy people for our faithlessness—a vengeance that roused to its highest pitch the eloquence of Burke. It was in the Carnatic that our influence, as our arms, competed with enemies then more formidable to our power than even the French, Hyder and his son Tippoo. Gradually we acquired the supremacy we sought; as usual, however, it brought embarrassments and difficulties, other than political, on the Prince immeshed in it. Of the debts and loans of the Nabobs of Arcot, there is a parliamentary literature of their own. For many years a very costly commission and establishment were maintained at home to enquire into them, and large retiring pensions are still paid to its surviving members and officers. Of their legality, of their classification, of their liquidation, a volume of Oriental romance might be written. At last they were paid off, or their future payment secured by Carnatic Bonds; but long before their arrangement or discharge, the Carnatic had ceased to exist as a State, either in an independent or a dependent form; its Nabob had been removed from the capital, practically deposed, and consigned to a convenient prison, still mis-named *the Palace* of Chepank, situated under the guns of Fort St. George.

It was from no great belief in the goodness of his title, but from a very deep sense of the Company's reputed interests, that British valour made Mahomed Ali Nabob of the Carnatic. His elevation, however, realized its main design, the abatement of French, and the extension of British influence in Southern India. The Company guaranteed, of course, the dominion they had secured to him. They provided a military force for the defence of the Carnatic, and he bound himself to pay its cost. The result of this relation was the now familiar one; the Nabob undertook (by the Treaty of 1787) to pay an amount larger than either his revenue or his then acknowledged liabilities permitted him to discharge with regularity; and his want of punctuality was attributed to his misgovernment. The deeper and

deeper he sunk into debt, the more and more the Company insisted on ampler and better security. This, our first war with Tippoo furnished us with an opportunity of taking. In 1792, Lord Cornwallis imposed a new Treaty on the Nabob. There were, however, a sense of justice and a glow of generosity in Lord Cornwallis's mind, rarely found in Governors-General. He insisted on having full authority, to use when necessary, over the Carnatic; but he reduced the tribute of the Nabob from 15 to 9 lacs of Star Pagodas,\* and he especially renounced all power over "the Jaghires or family estates belonging to the Prince's family, amounting to Star Pagodas 2,13,911, which, on condition of the good behaviour of their possessors, the Jaghcerdars, and of their fidelity to the Nabob and the Company, shall (he engaged) be continued to them, subject to the pleasure of the said Nabob only." Thus, in extending the real power of the Company over the Carnatic, that great and successful statesman improved the pecuniary position of the Nabob, and conciliated his Court. Three years afterwards—1795—Mahomed Ali died, and was succeeded by his son, Omdut ul Ourah.

Towards the close of the century, Lord Clive was the titular Governor of Madras; Mr. Webbe, chief Secretary of the Government, was, however, the real Governor. Of the latter, the Duke of Wellington pronounced an opinion that he was one of the ablest men the Duke ever knew. Lord Clive, a much inferior person, not unnaturally, was much influenced by Mr. Webbe, who to great abilities added what Lord Clive also wanted, large experience of India, and the unscrupulous rapacity which then accompanied it. On his way to Calcutta, Lord Wellesley, the next Governor-General, touched at Madras. There he discharged his mind of the resolution he had taken, whilst at the Cape of Good Hope, to punish Tippoo for his really childish, but, no doubt, in intention, dangerous philandering with the French Revolutionists of the Mauritius, whom Lord Wellesley hated

\* One lac, or 100,000 Star Pagodas are £40,000. A Star Pagoda is eight shillings.—This coin has been superseded by the Company's Rupee.



with so fierce a hatred; there too he acquired—or, perhaps, propagated—suspicions against Omdut ul Omrah. Tippoo was quickly destroyed, and Mysore (a small part excepted), partitioned. Then Lord Wellesley and Lord Clive turned round upon the Nabob of the Carnatic. They charged him with sympathy for and secret intercourse with his co-religionist, Tippoo, with whom indeed Lord Cornwallis had advised him to keep up a friendly correspondence; though aid or assistance he had none to give to that Prince. Establishing their own charge by their own evidence and their own commission, Mr. Webbe being on it, they pronounced themselves released from the obligations of Lord Cornwallis's Treaty of 1792, and they were about to treat Omdut ul Omrah as a public enemy, when death terminated that unhappy Prince's troubles; but not their determination to annex the Carnatic. They denied that his son, Ali Hussein, inherited his throne; but they decided that though a boy, not of age, he had succeeded to the position of public enmity to British authority imputed to his father. The unhappy lad, like the late Rajah of Sattarah, had the spirit to refuse a nominal throne, and accept of a life of ease and infamy, on the condition of signing a Treaty handing over the Carnatic territorially, in vicarious liquidation of his father's alleged offences against the Company. There was no Benares 1000 miles off in those days, to receive and retain the Company's State prisoners. So he—the grandson of Mahomed Ali, the Company's own Nabob!—with whom on those terms of disgrace they were willing to treat as lawful heir, was declared to be an impostor. An heir more pliant, as well as more legitimate, was next sought and found in another grandson; and with this lay figure of a Sovereign, the Treaty of 1801 was made. By it, the Carnatic, its territories, its revenues, and rights, were vested in the Company; the Nabob receiving as his share of the spoil, one-fifth\* of the net revenue of the State he surrendered up.

\* It would appear, from the mode in which the Carnatic Finance Accounts are now made out and delivered to that Prince, that the present Nabob does not receive the one-fifth of the net revenues to which he is entitled under the Treaty of 1801.

Thus fell the Carnatic. All that now remains of its former native greatness is to be seen in the beggarly and ruinous palace of Chépank. There lives the nominal Nabob, still ludicrously treated with salvos of artillery in his visits to the Governor of Madras, still received and fraternally and publicly *hugged* as an anointed Prince on State occasions; still held sacred and exempt from the jurisdiction of British law; but not suffered to stir an inch from the bounds prescribed for his airings, without leave first asked and obtained *in writing* from his jailers: without occupation, without employment, without hope, without object in life, a miserable pensioned puppet; relieving the tedium of life by exhibitions of dancing girls and other such follies; his palace, a prison, girt by a tumble-down native town, where dwell in famine and filth the crowd descended from that Court and those servants of the State, whose career of activity, ambition, and honourable occupation finally and equally closed in 1801 with that of their Sovereign.

These men were the Jagheerdars for whom Lord Cornwallis so considerately and nobly provided in the Treaty of 1792. They held their Jaghires, or great fiefs, in what was called Altungha Enaum, or as we would say in Fee Simple; and so complete and independent were their possession, that by the Treaty of 1801, the value (star pagodas 2,13,421) of these private estates had to be deducted from the gross revenue of the Carnatic, in estimating the fifth of the net revenue assigned to the Nabob. Their existence, as private property, was thus distinctly recognized. The Jaghires themselves were, however, for reasons of public safety, assumed by the Company. But by the ninth Article of the Treaty, the Company charged itself with a suitable provision for the families and the Courts of the two preceding Nabobs, and undertook to distribute it in such manner as the Nabob, then acknowledged, should judge proper. No sooner however was this Treaty signed, than the Company, by an explanatory article which they alone signed, shuffled out of the liability to the full extent of the annual value of the Jaghires they had just acquired, by declaring that they

were at liberty to exercise a discretion as to "the extent of the provision to be made for the support of the family and the principal officers of the two Nabobs, Mahomed Ali and Omdut ul Omrah."

This "discretion," they quickly did exercise. On the 29th Sept. 1801, Lord Clive fixed by a Minute of Council the amount of the pecuniary provision (which had to be provided under the ninth article of the Treaty of 31st July 1801) at rupees 6,98,473, or star pagodas 1,99,564. Thus was at once acquired for the Company a profit of star pagodas 13,857 on the Jaghires which, though granted in fee simple, the Company assumed: a proceeding, at which Lord Cornwallis's noble nature would have blushed. And this sum of rupees 6,98,473, (or about £70,000) had to be divided amongst men, who, in addition to these hereditary Jaghires, had enjoyed all the high offices of the Native Court which was extinguished, and to whom all other similar channels of employment were now closed. It had too to be divided amongst families accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of civilized life. It was not therefore a very magnificent fulfilment of the obligations imposed by the Treaty. But at all events it was then deemed a certainty and a permanence; and in that there was some comfort.

It has proved otherwise. The amount of these stipends was duly paid to the persons entitled to them as long as they lived; and, after their deaths, for some years their descendants succeeded to the stipends without question, and as a matter of right. Gradually, however, the Madras Government has gone on reducing them, until in 1851 their aggregate annual amount only reached star pagodas 85,714. To some persons and families, their allowances have been reduced one-third, to others one-half, in some cases by two-thirds. Concurrently, the families dependent on the stipend have gone on increasing. Nearly all the stipendiaries are consequently in debt and embarrassment; some of the descendants of the last Carnatic monarchs starving on one rupee, or two shillings a-month; others eking life out by netting and embroidering: one family great-grandchildren

of Mahomed Ali, reduced from the position of stipendiaries, as was their father, are existing on charity; and the whole of these unfortunate people are now in the direst apprehension that, on the deaths of the present recipients, no further allowances will be made to their families. In short, the whole colony dependent on Chepank, composed of Mahomedan gentlemen of rank and condition, is at present living in a dread of future starvation.

Now these families either have, or have not, rights under the Treaty of 1801. There is nothing in the language of that Treaty which restricts the obligations of the ninth Article to the heirs of those then living, or their immediate descendants. The Jaghires were hereditary, and held in fee-simple; they were recognised by the Treaty of 1792; their annual value, as there settled, is deducted, under the Treaty of 1801, from the gross revenues of the Carnatic, as an amount the Company had no right to; and by every rule of justice, the money equivalent assigned for the Jaghires by the Company ought to be as lasting a tenure as the Jaghires themselves—that is perpetual. Of the Treaty of 1801, the Company has still the benefit; so ought the Nabob to have. It is in full force. Why, then, are not the meaner parties affected by it, as much entitled to its permanent advantages as the greater powers who contracted it?

If, however, in the opinion of the Indian Government, these persons have no permanent rights under the Treaty, it is the refinement of cruelty not to announce to them their actual position—not to warn them against the approaching termination of their allowances—not to define in the most accurate manner the legal duration of their stipends. At present, they are left in suspense; hung between heaven and earth; the victims of a policy which is not avowed. And why is it not avowed? Because it is too unjustifiable to avow. Turn to what account of the transactions of 1801 that you will, there you will find all, equally those who praise and those who condemn the acquisition of the Carnatic, uniting to laud the liberality which provided for the support of the families and courts of our own Nabobs. Yet, fifty

years have scarcely passed away, and some of the descendants of those Princes are starving; others are in want, all in dread and apprehension of the future.

Can any man say that this is a just or an honourable fulfilment of the terms on which the Company became complete masters of the Carnatic? Will any one contend that this is creditable or honourable to the British Crown and People, for whom the Company are Trustees of India? But for this wrong there is no remedy.

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## HOW THE COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT DESPOILS DEPOSED NATIVE PRINCES.

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In the destruction of the Native States in India, there is less to be said against the overthrow of the Peishwa than against any other. The authority of those Princes over the principal members of the old Mahratta confederacy was an usurped power; they held in captivity the family of Sevajee, the founder of Mahratta greatness; they maintained their authority by superior intrigue rather than intelligence; they were mischievously disposed towards, rather than, like Scindia and Holkar, openly hostile to British power; and they encouraged for their own purposes Pindarri robbery and freebooting. Baji Row, the last of the Peishwas, too, wanted even the ordinary courage of his family; he was cowardly, treacherous, cruel, and superstitious; he had, too, been party to an assassination of extraordinary atrocity in itself, and of unpardonable insult to the British Government. So when he surrendered to the arms of Lord Hastings, none except his Court and Sirdars regretted his fall. By his destruction the Company's Government not only got rid of a dangerous enemy, but added 50,000 square miles of territory in the very heart of their dominions, and four millions of the bravest people of India to their strength. Despite his public offences

and his personal faults, Baji Row was, however, nobly treated by Lord Hastings; he settled £100,000 a year on the ex-Peishwa, allowed him to choose his own residence, to exercise jurisdiction over his followers and guards, and permitted him to carry away camel loads of his treasures. So that for the thirty years he survived his loss of power, Baji Row had at least all the wealth and splendour of a prince, and was able to quiet his fears of the other world by the largeness of his offerings to Hindoo shrines and holy places in this.

From his camp fled the heir of the rightful Mahratta Princes, Pertaub Shean, the head of all the Mahrattas. What to do with him became at once a great question. Lord Hastings left it to Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone to give him either a large estate or a small principality. "At the time I had to decide," Mr. Elphinstone afterwards wrote to Lord Hastings, "the Mahrattas showed no disposition whatever to quit the Peishwa's standard, and it appeared not improbable that the dread of the complete extinction of their national independence, and, still more, of the entire loss of their means of subsistence, would induce them to adhere to Baji Row, that could never have been produced by affection to his person or interest in his cause." Therefore, for British interests, did Mr. Elphinstone carve out the little state of Sattarah, and over it make Pertaub Shean Rajah. Taught wisdom in his misfortunes, that Prince in his prosperity governed Sattarah so admirably, that to testify their sense of his government and his fidelity, the Court of Directors presented him with a sword of honour. After an admirable reign of nearly twenty years he became the victim of Brahminical intrigues and of British credulity; and on the ground of imputed intrigues which, if real, would have been ridiculous and contemptible, it was resolved in 1839 to unmake the Rajah whom we had made in 1819.

Beloved and honoured by his people, the Rajah could have made a strong resistance; and as any disturbances in India, at that particular juncture, when the Government had rushed into the Afghan war, might have proved infectious, the Resident was directed by the Bombay Government to inform the Rajah, "that all property belonging to him, *bonâ fide*,

private, and not appertaining to the State, would, on his peaceable submission, not be interfered with." Thrice was this offer repeated to the Rajah and afterwards reduced to, and confirmed in, writing. He accepted it; peaceably submitted, surrendered all his property, public and private, into the hands of the Resident, left for Benares with only the jewels his two wives happened to wear at the time, regulating his suite, however, according to the large means he had thus secured.

Pertaub Shean was not a penniless Prince when the Company thus found and used him for its own purposes. Though holding them captives, the Peishwa had always respected the private landed estates of the House of Sevajee, and these he possessed when raised to the Raj. Following Mr. Elphinstone's good advice, he separated as a ruling Prince his public from his private treasury, and throughout his reign kept each quite distinct, and managed them by different officers. As in public, so in private affairs, he was prudent and economical; like our own most gracious Sovereign, he invested his personal savings principally in the purchase of land, bought his Osbornes and his Balmorals, and in the course of twenty years had added largely to his territorial property; he had also considerable wealth in jewels and other personalty, as well as a large sum in ready money, the value of the whole not being less than £300,000.

Relying on the promise that all this property would not be interfered with, he allowed not fewer than 1,200 attached friends and dependents to follow him into exile and confinement at Benares. But from the hour he left Sattarah to the day of his death, not one rupee was the Rajah permitted to receive from this guaranteed source. Every thing he left behind—jaghires, villages, houses, farms, gardens, jewels, money, clothes, all—were confiscated. In vain he demanded their restoration; in vain he quoted and appealed to the promise made to him,—in vain he prayed for justice. His complaints were unheeded; his supplications were turned aside. Baji Row, the Rajah's usurping minister, was surrounded in his exile by the riches Lord Hastings had permitted him

to carry away from Poona. Pertaub Shean, the rightful Prince, was denied in his confinement the use of his own property. Wealth was showered on the usurper, who had resisted to the uttermost. Poverty was the doom of the legitimate heir, who had submitted in peace.

At Benares the deposed Rajah had, of course, an allowance, but so small in amount, that it proved wholly insufficient for the reasonable maintenance of his family. In consequence, the Prince was obliged to submit to great personal discomfort and deep humiliation; he continued throughout the remnant of his days to be hampered and embarrassed by debts and liabilities; and at last he died deeply involved, leaving his wives, his adopted son, and five hundred followers in the greatest poverty. So that by his deposition and the subsequent annexation of Sattarah the Company's Government gained a territory, yielding a large public revenue (less, however, than the cost of its administration); but in violation of the most solemn promises, the Company confiscated £300,000 of this unhappy man's private fortune. And when lately appealed to by nine Proprietors of India Stock, on behalf of the creditors and the family of Pertaub Shean, all the answer those gentlemen—Mr. Hume at their head—got from the Directors was, that "the Court of Directors cannot consent to re-open a question long since decided." And for this wrong, also, there is no remedy.

## HOW THE COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT TREATS NATIVE MERCHANTS.

When Mahomedan intolerance drove the last remnant of the old Fire Worshippers, or Parsees, from Persia, they found a home in Guzerat, where they soon became eminent in agricultural and commercial pursuits. Whilst Surat remained, under native rule, a great and flourishing city,



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containing some 400,000 inhabitants, they were foremost amongst its merchants and bankers. On its decay and depopulation, under British dominion, they enriched, by transferring their enterprise and their capital to Bombay; and there Parsee mercantile houses have continued to possess the greater part of the home, and no small share of the foreign trade.

Prominent amongst them was the family of Merjee; it consisted of two brothers, Pestonjee Merjee and Viccajee Merjee, trading under the designation of Pestonjee Viccajee. From small beginnings this firm rose to great importance; until the partners not only possessed the confidence, but were also employed by the Bombay Government. As far back as 1817, they were entrusted by Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone with the fiscal management of a great part of the Northern Konkan, then just conquered from the Peishwa. During our war with that Prince, they advanced large sums for the payment of our troops, and in this connexion won praises from all the British authorities. Throughout a great portion of our new acquisitions they constructed at their own expense bungalows for travellers; in Candeish they cleared a great jungle; in most of the new British towns they established banking establishments; but especially they devoted their attention to promote and increase the growth, cultivation and trade in cotton. In this enterprise, they opened up roads in that portion of Berar which belongs to the Nizam, supplied the peasantry with capital, furnished them with means of carriage, erected screws and presses; and with such effect, that between the years 1825 and 1836, they increased the production of Berar cotton from 120,000 lbs., worth £2,500, to 48,000,000 lbs. of the value of £600,000. The firm of Pestonjee Viccajee was, therefore, it will be seen, no ordinary commercial establishment; it had achieved great public results, and deserved well of the Company's Government, whose subjects its members were.

In prosecution of their cotton trade, Pestonjee Merjee went in 1835 to Hyderabad, the capital of the Deccan, carrying with him letters of recommendation from the Bombay Go-

vernment to the Resident at the Nizam's court, and there, in the British town which surrounds the Residency, he established himself. Actively engaged in promoting the cultivation of the Berar districts, the Nizam's Government availed itself of his abilities. It forced on the house the management of the revenue affairs of nearly the whole valley of Berar; and under their just and protecting influence, waste lands were brought under culture, the growth of cotton was still further extended, the revenues were regularly paid, and the condition of the country greatly improved. As was to be expected, the Native Government got gradually into the debt of Pestonjee Viccajee; still down to 1838, the account was not (in comparison with future advances) largely overdrawn; the balance against the Nizam being only £56,000.

In that year the Affghan war—the origin of so many ills and woes—was declared; and its enormous demands on the Indian Treasuries pressed heavily on the pecuniary means of the Company. Under the Treaty of 1802, (concluded after the destruction of Tippoo Sultan) the Nizam was obliged to keep up a contingent of 9,000 cavalry and 6,000 infantry for the use of the British Government. This force is,\* substantially, part of the British army, disciplined in the same manner, commanded by British officers, paid through the British Resident. Of so little use is it to the Nizam, that to carry on the internal administration of his country, he is obliged to maintain a great army of Rohillas, Arabs, Affghaus, and Sikhs of his own. Now in 1838, that prince had not sufficient available funds to keep up the pay of the contingent, which takes one-fifth of his whole revenue, without being of any service to him; and the Company, with the Affghan war to provide for, had, of course, no money to spare.

In this dilemma the firm of Pestonjee Viccajee was requested, with the full knowledge and approbation of the Resident, by the Nizam's Government, to stand between it and the British authorities. They did: they supplied funds to pay the Contingent, and by doing so, saved the Deccan from disorders, and the Company from embarrassment in Southern

\* See *India Reform*, No. IV. *The Native States of India*, pp. 10 and 11.

India. The advances, once began, continued. The firm drew bills on their correspondents where the different brigades were stationed; these bills were handed by the Nizam's minister to the British officer in command, and by him, their proceeds were applied in payment of the Contingent. The amount so advanced had by June, 1843, reached the enormous sum of £687,000. Much of it was supplied to Pestonjee Viccajee by friends and correspondents who confided in them; and in 1841 the firm, urged by their creditors, very properly requested, as English bankers under the circumstances would long before have done, the Nizam's Government to give them a tangible security for these and future advances. The request was complied with: a mortgage of part of the Berar revenues was made to them; it was delivered to the British Resident; he placed it on the records of the Residency, and gave Pestonjee Viccajee an authenticated copy; for, (to use his own words), "the satisfaction of their creditors." The Resident was consequently a party to this mortgage; he retained the deed, avouched its sufficiency, and in effect, if not in form, guaranteed the transaction.

In 1845, though the debt had, by their excellent management of the mortgaged districts, been then reduced to some £300,000, Pestonjee Viccajee became desirous of drawing the account to a close, and resolved to make no further advances. This determination gave great umbrage to the Nizam's government, which was thus thrown on its own resources to provide directly and regularly, for the Contingent's pay. Nevertheless, applied to by the Nizam for a personal loan, they accommodated him. Scarcely, however, had they done so, when the possession of the mortgaged districts was demanded from them; and, that being refused, their agents and people were expelled by force, sixteen of them being killed and fifteen more wounded.

Against this injustice Pestonjee Viccajee appealed to the Resident. General Fraser forwarded the appeal to the Supreme Government; but, though the Company had in reality been the recipient of the sums advanced; and though its representative had officially registered and recognized the

mortgage; the Supreme Government, without assigning any reason, refused to interfere. The consequence was, that in 1848, this great House was obliged to stop payment, receiving, however, the utmost sympathy and consideration from its creditors. From that time Pestonjee Veejee continued to prosecute their claims both at Hyderabad and at Calcutta; with no success, however. The Nizam's Government would not pay the settled and admitted balance of £260,000; and the Supreme Government, which had received the money and which was the only power to enforce justice, would not condescend to listen to their subjects' entreaties and reclamations.

In March 1851, the agents of the House sought in England the justice denied them in India. They waited on Mr. Herries, then President of the Board of Control, and on the Chairman, the Deputy-Chairman, and others of the East India Directors. At these interviews their claim was fully recognized, the utmost sympathy was expressed for their painful situation, and the impression produced was that their case would receive support. At last came the official reply to their Memorial; it simply stated that "the instructions of the Court would be communicated through the Governor of India." The agents again privately appealed to the Home authorities; were assured that letters would be written both by the President of the India Board and the Chairman of the Court of Directors to the Governor-General of India, in their favour, and that with the result they would have reason to be satisfied.

Thus inspired with hope, they hastened to Calcutta, there to receive this favourable answer. Instead of it, the Court of Directors had instructed the Governor-General, "not to interfere for the realization of any such claims!" By these instructions, Lord Dalhousie was of course bound. He, however, was equally full of verbal professions; he received the agents, voluntarily stated that he had no prejudice against them, and assured them that if he were to receive instructions from the Court of Directors, he would be ready to obey. So, again,

a second time, the agents (sons of Pestonjee and Vicajee) have come to England in search of justice.

In 1848, a single peremptory word from the British Resident at Hyderabad would have saved Pestonjee Vicajee from this ruin. That word was not uttered: they were allowed to be wrongfully ousted from the mortgages of which they were in lawful possession. For six years they appealed in vain for assistance and help in the recovery of their acknowledged claim from the Supreme Government. Then they extend their pursuit of justice to England. Here they are encouraged to expect it on a return to Calcutta. And there they find, instead of the promised support, the stereotyped refusal to enforce what is right, and remedy what is wrong.

Motives for the refusal to act, in 1845, it is needless to impute. But this is clear, that so long as Pestonjee Vicajee would supply funds to pay the Contingent, they were kept in possession of the districts: immediately they ceased their advances, they were allowed to be ejected. And this is how the Company's Government treats native merchants. The House of Pestonjee Vicajee was rich, almost "beyond the bounds of human avarice;"—its aged partners are now about to be turned out penniless on the streets of Bombay. Who is to blame? Can any one doubt that it is the Company's Government? Yet for the recovery of this debt, for the satisfaction of this wrong, the law has provided no remedy.

## HOW THE COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT BEHAVES TO OLD ALLIES.

Cooke, nearly opposite Baicul and not far from Tellicherry, is, or rather was, a little Principality, perched on the range of mountains that look down upon Malabar and the western coast of India. Towards the close of the 18th century, it became a country of very considerable political importance; for it

alone, of its neighbours, maintained its complete independence against the victorious career of Hyder Ally, and from its position greatly impeded and obstructed his ambitious designs. A pass connecting the Coast Provinces with Mysore, runs through the Coorg Hills; and so long as this pass was in the possession of an adverse Prince and a brave independent people, Mysore might become assailable from the East India Company's Western Capital, Bombay. Hence Hyder and his still more implacable son, bent every effort to conquer Coorg; at times they were nearly successful; once they had captured and imprisoned the Rajah; but fortune more or less protected him, until Tippoo brought down on himself the just anger and the irresistible arms of Lord Cornwallis.

Of the Rajahs of Coorg, before they had thus acquired the enmity and persecution of Hyder Ally and Tippoo little is known, except that they had, for centuries, ruled over a brave mountainous people, whose attachment and fidelity to their sovereigns became conspicuous when those successful Mahomedan usurpers of Mysore attacked their little State. It was however against desperate odds that the Rajah of Coorg resisted assaults, in which religious fanaticism against a Hindoo Prince, joined with a strong desire to possess a country so important to the safety and defence of Mysore, redoubled the animosity against Coorg independence; and severewere the sufferings both of the Rajah and his people in their gallant and determined resistance. Their sovereign's cruel imprisonment at Seringapatam did not abate the ardour of his subjects; the mountaineers held out firmly and heroically, even when the Rajah was in their oppressor's hands; and the commencement of Lord Cornwallis' war against Tippoo found the Rajah still in possession of the greater part of his own country. He at once risked all the dangers of Tippoo's success, and boldly volunteered co-operation with the British. It was then—26th October, 1790—our first Treaty with Coorg was signed; and in it both parties “jointly call God, the Sun, the Moon, and the World” “to witness that pledge of their perpetual friendship.” The Rajah entered heartily into the war; not only did he allow the Bombay army to pass through

his dominions; but, when distressed for provisions, he supplied it with grain and cattle, refusing all pecuniary compensation. He joined Lord Cornwallis before Seringapatam, shared in all the dangers of the campaign, was foremost in every fight, and almost worshipped the British soldiers for their indomitable courage in those desperate encounters. The preliminary articles of peace were nearly concluded when Tippoo's desire to reck his vengeance on the Rajah risked everything; Lord Cornwallis insisted on Tippoo recognising the complete independence of Coorg, for he was resolved to protect so faithful and useful an Ally. Irritated almost to madness by being thus disappointed of vengeance, Tippoo refused; and it was only when Lord Cornwallis had again pointed his guns against Seringapatam, that his obstinacy gave way. Grateful for these services, Lord Cornwallis undertook never to interfere in the internal affairs of Coorg, and commuted a large money payment, insisted on by the Bombay authorities, for an elephant which the Rajah was yearly to present to the East India Company.

Equally faithful to the English alliance, and equally useful in the campaign, was the Rajah of Coorg in our second and final war with Tippoo; and it is not too much to say that without his energetic co-operation, the Bombay army could not have reached Seringapatam in 1799. "The Rajah of Coorg," wrote Lord Wellesley, in 1799, "has seconded my views and the exertions of the Company's servants on this occasion, with a degree of spirit, energy, and fidelity, which confirm the high character he had justly obtained in the late war." He and his brother and successor were in fact our firm and steadfast friends—when their friendship was of value; and with their throne the son of the latter Prince inherited their feelings and policy.

In so remote and difficult a country as Coorg this youthful Rajah had but little intercourse with Europeans; his life was passed principally in its field and hill sports; and over subjects bold and hardy he ruled with all the fire and spirit of a mountain chief. Of what went on internally the British Au-

thorities outside knew little; but a succession of disputes occurred between the Rajah and the Resident of Mysore, in which the Prince spoke and wrote with a courage and fearlessness to which Residents in India are but little accustomed. The origin of these disputes was the marriage of one of the Rajah's sisters with a man of an inferior position. On the death of this man's first wife, to save the family from the supposed humiliation of his contracting an inferior marriage, a second sister was given him, and he was handsomely supported at the Rajah's expence. Dissatisfied, however, with his want of power, he committed a most barbarous murder, fled towards Mysore; and on the frontiers cut down two of the Coorg people who attempted to prevent his escape. In Mysore, unfortunately, he was received and protected by the British authorities, and into their ears he instilled the vilest calumnies against the Rajah. That Prince demanded the extradition of the murderer; the demand, being refused, was repeated more vehemently. Discussion with the Madras Government followed; it proposed to send a Commissioner to Coorg to arrange the dispute; but the Commissioner appointed never reached its capital, Macara. One of his native suite, however, did; and was instantly arrested by the Rajah, who refused to surrender him unless his brother-in-law was first given up. To this request the British Government would not listen, and from it the Rajah would not recede. So in the beginning of 1834 a Proclamation was issued deposing the Rajah, and an army advanced into Coorg to carry out the Proclamation. This was done, though not without some little difficulty; in April 1834 the Rajah surrendered; all his treasures were seized, Coorg was annexed, and after some little delay he and his family were sent state prisoners to Benares.

At Benares the Rajah was at first placed upon a most inadequate allowance, but, on the representation of Colonel Carpenter, the British officer in charge of him, it was increased to £6,000 a-year; the Government of India having, of course, by his deposition, gained the whole revenues of Coorg. At Benares the Rajah supported his exile with dignity and firmness; for fourteen years he and his family



were in charge of Colonel Carpenter, and the result of their intercourse has been thus authoritatively recorded by that distinguished officer :

*" Minute recorded by Lieut.-Colonel Carpenter, Agent to the Governor-General of India, Benares, 1st January, 1848.*

"The period for my departure from Benares and return to Europe having arrived, I cannot part with his Highness the Rajah of Coorg, without giving him a testimonial of the sentiments with which he has inspired me.

"Since the Rajah quitted his palace at Coorg, in April, 1834, he has been under my charge, and I have infinite satisfaction in recording the quiet, peaceable, and exemplary behaviour of His Highness during the long period of nearly fourteen years that I have been a constant observer of his conduct, and which has been several times favourably noticed in my various reports to the Supreme Government.

"I am aware that *subsequent to the Rajah's deposal* numerous charges of cruelty and oppression, whilst he reigned in Coorg, have been brought against him ; but I am bound in justice to declare, that during the whole time he has been under my care, no evidence of a cruel disposition has ever been exhibited ; on the contrary, his manners and habits are mild and gentle in the extreme, and he has invariably won the regard and esteem of all parties with whom he came in contact since he quitted Coorg. Unfortunately, previous to that event, he had never seen more than half a dozen European officers in his life. The Rajah is a perfect specimen of an innate gentleman, though naturally reserved and shy, so that it becomes necessary to know him well to appreciate his many good and amiable qualities : he is particularly susceptible of attention and kindness.

"In conclusion, I earnestly recommend him and his family to consideration, and heartily and sincerely bid him farewell, with my best and warmest wishes that comfort and happiness may attend them in every situation, and under all circumstances. The Rajah's numerous children are especial objects of care and anxiety to him, owing to the extreme difficulty of providing for their future welfare, more particularly the little girl he is in the habit of dressing in the European style. Any kindness to her is peculiarly gratifying to the Rajah, and he is very desirous that she shall be educated and brought up as if she was an European : whatever arrangements he may wish

to make for the future provision of the child, will, I trust, receive the assistance and support of my successor, as far as it may be in his power to grant it."

In time the Rajah himself not only professed Christianity, but resolved to bring up his favourite daughter—the child thus referred to by Colonel Carpenter—in the faith and nurture of England. With this view, as also to prosecute claims about to be explained, he solicited and obtained permission from the Supreme Government of India to visit this country for twelve months; and, accompanied by the young lady, and a proper suite, he arrived in London in the beginning of 1852. On his arrival here, he unexpectedly found his chief design encouraged and promoted in the highest quarters. The Queen graciously condescended to become sponsor for the child; assigned her guardianship and education to a lady of rank and eminent fitness; and in due course of time the little girl was separated from the Rajah, for the purpose—to use his own language—of being "brought up with English habits and notions." Thus parted from his little favourite, the Rajah's attachment for her seems to have increased, and in dread of the approaching permanent separation, he requested an extension of his leave of absence from Benares. This request the Court stiffly and curtly refused.\* The Rajah renewed his application with still greater warmth; first, on the ground of his unwillingness to leave his child, about whose position he laboured under some degree of uncertainty, and also for the purpose of arranging, if possible, his private affairs.

"My natural feelings as a father," he wrote to the Secretary of the East India Company, on the 17th January, 1853, "towards my daughter, lately become a Christian, whom I must leave behind me in England, when I return to India, induce me to wish to prolong my stay for a time, as the separation, when it takes place between me and my child will be, in all human probability, a separation for ever. And, although I would not give way to any anxiety on the subject of my daughter's future comfort and happiness, when Her

\* Secretary of the East India Company to the ex-Rajah of Coorg, 24th Dec.

Majesty has so graciously condescended to care for both her spiritual and temporal concerns—for which I feel, and shall ever feel, most grateful—yet I may permit myself to indulge in some sorrow at the near prospect of taking leave of her.

“My visit to England was determined upon in order to bring my daughter to be baptized, educated in the Christian faith, and brought up with English habits and English notions; and was projected by me solely with the view of gratifying this, the earnest desire of my heart, without having any reason to hope for any distinguished patronage for myself or child. The spontaneous act of condescension on the part of Her Most Gracious Majesty was necessarily unlooked for by me, and was of a character to call forth, as it did, both my surprise and my gratitude. I do, therefore, earnestly desire to remain some time longer in the same country where my child is, and where I can still see her.”

In this tender appeal to their sympathies, the Court however, could\* “see no sufficient ground for any extension of leave of absence,” and insisted that the afflicted father should “no longer delay to procure a passage to India.” Becoming, however, more and more dissatisfied with the conduct of those in whose charge his daughter was placed, the Rajah did not obey this order to return to Benares, and the consequence is, that the Court of Directors have, at last, resolved to stop payment of his allowance—or, in other words, to starve both him here and his family at Benares, into compliance.

But for the Rajah’s wish to remain longer in England, there is another and a more serious reason. The allowance he now receives from the Government of India may, we see, be stopped or diminished, whenever it pleases the Governor-General or the Court of Directors. Now, before her Majesty would assume the responsibility of the young Princess’ education, it became, and very properly, necessary to provide a fund to defray its cost, and for the young lady’s subsequent maintenance in England. The Rajah thereupon bound himself by deed with trustees—Lord Hardinge and Sir J. W. Hogg—to pay £400 a year on her account. Before leaving her, he is, however, desirous of securing this annuity to his child

for her own life, and not merely for such a length of time as he may live, or may possess his present allowance from the Government of India. He therefore, seeks to remain until he can give the Queen this additional guarantee for his daughter's independent support. But this he can only do by a settlement of his own pecuniary affairs; and these require some explanation to comprehend the full gravity of the conduct of the Court of Directors.

The uncle and father of the Prince now in London, were both prudent and economical Sovereigns; and so well did they rule their mountainous principality, that they were able to invest not less, we believe, than nearly ten lacs of rupees (or about £100,000) in the Company's Funds, all of which the Rajah inherited; receiving, through his Commercial Agents at Madras, the dividends thereon, regularly to the period when the disputes already referred to commenced.

The pecuniary claims of the Rajah are two—one derived from his father, the other from his uncle, the prior Rajah. His father, Rajah Ling Rajundur Wadeer, invested a large sum of money in the Madras 5 per cent loan, and on that Prince's death, the present Rajah inherited it, and received the dividends down to 1831, when it was converted into the Company's 4 per cent paper in his own name. His uncle had also invested a much larger sum in his only child, a daughter's name; but, on it, the dividends were paid first to his brother Rajah Ling, and then to his nephew the ex-Rajah, who, by his cousin's death unmarried, became her heir also. The dividends on both these sums continued to be paid to the ex-Rajah until the commencement of the disputes with the British authorities. Then their payment was suspended; and, after the unhappy Prince's deposition, it was absolutely refused. A prisoner and exile at Benares, dependent on the bounty of the Indian Government, the ex-Rajah was not, of course, in a position favourable to the prosecution of his claims; he made, however, several representations on the subject, but though he stands in their own books as a public creditor, to the extent of upwards of £90,000, he was informed the Indian Government did not recognise their liability to pay

their debts in his case; and from 1832 to 1853, this portion of their public debt has, in point of fact, been repudiated. Before leaving Benares the Rajah, however, informed the Governor-General that he would take active measures to bring the subject before the Home authorities; but here they refuse to listen to his case, and refer him back to India, where they will not "recognise" it.

The Rajah has a large family and being, as Colonel Carpenter states, a man of strong paternal affection, he desires to leave them a competence. For means to do so he has naturally turned to his private property vested in the territorial debt of India. There he stands as a public creditor; but from a period commencing two years' previous to his deposition, and while he was a reigning Prince and their Ally, down to this hour, the Indian Government have repudiated payment of the dividends thereon; and though for nineteen years he has addressed reclamation after reclamation against this injustice, his petitions, he says, "*have only been passed over in silence.*" He now asks the Court of Directors to restore this property to him, that he may make a permanent settlement on the Queen's *protegee*, and provide for his other children at Benares. And the Court refer him to that Local Government by which, for these nineteen years, his letters have remained unanswered!

Upon such conduct, the worst that can be said is, that it wants the boldness, the straightforwardness, and the formal honesty of Louis Napoleon in confiscating the Orleans property. The Indian Government deprive the unhappy Prince of the dividends on private savings invested in the Company's funds, and refuse him all explanation of this act of arbitrary power; and when he appeals to the Home Government, they will not listen to his complaint, because it is not transmitted through a Local Government that will not correspond with him on the subject! And for a Wrong like this, there is in our Indian System—in that "*most absolute despotism,*" which, according to Lord John Russell, "*is qualified and tempered by the genius of Representative Government*"—no Remedy.

NOTE TO TRACT NO. IV.

"THE NATIVE PRINCES OF INDIA."

*In confirmation of the statement contained in this Tract as to the resumption proceedings of the British Authorities in Sattarah, we are now enabled to quote the following,*

"Feb. 2, 1853.

"I have been informed from Bombay that the Company's Government have lately appointed an 'Enam Committee' to inquire into the tenure and nature of enams, [rent-free grants of land], jagheers, &c. Under this pretence the local authorities have extended their injustice in a measure which is not the less short of usurpation of the rights and enjoyments of private individuals, than the usurpation of sovereignties.

"The authorities have demanded the papers and sunnuds [grants], from all Enamdars [rent-free holders], jagheerdars, &c., upon which they hold and enjoy their enams [grants] and jagheers [estates]. The latter, however ready to produce their deeds, have been molested by an arbitrary search in their houses, in order to take away *all other papers, documents, &c.* appertaining to the Enam, or to whatever other matters there might be of private concern. To convince you of the fact, I will herein give you the instance of the shameful treatment met with by Khundeyrow and Rowbah at the hands of the authorities. Khundeyrow and Rowbah are in the possession and enjoyment of their Enam village, Boregaun. There they were called upon by the authorities to give up all the papers, records, documents, they may possess and lay them before the Enam Committee. This was an encroachment upon the concerns of private individuals, and, therefore, Khundeyrow and Rowbah of right remonstrated against the arbitrary demand, with the exception that they were ready to produce the Sunnuds and other documents appertaining to the same, by which they hold their Enams. Notwithstanding this offer, the authorities forcibly entered their houses, and took away to Poonah all the papers, records, &c. found therein, loaded in several carts. The ancient practice was to demand to see the sunnuds, take copies thereof, and return the originals to their holders. Among the papers were printed books and pamphlets which Rowbah had taken with him from Benares, and which related to the unfortunate case of His Highness the Rajah. In these books, there were copies or translations of certain papers which were proved to have been fabricated for the unjustifiable inculpation of his Highness. Upon this, the Mumlutdar [the paid local native authority], accused Khundeyrow and Rowbah of having kept papers in their houses relating to the transactions of Government, and even threatened to imprison them, which however the Mumlutdar did not do.

"This treatment of entering forcibly the houses of Enamdars, and searching and taking away all and every paper relating to whatever matters they may have, is not only suffered by Khundeyrow and

Rowbah, but by every Enamdar, in face of the integrity and paternal protection, avowed, of the British rule. If inquiry is to be made in respect to Enams only, nothing more could be wanted than a handful of papers including the sunnuds by which enams are held. If they are not produced, or if the right of holding the enams, is not established by the individuals, it is a matter of inquiry and investigation. But this arbitrary and unjustifiable treatment, as enforced by the Company's Government at present will no doubt teach the people to consider what they have to expect from the British rule.

"This is the case with those who hold sunnuds and other documents to prove the grant of the enams. But you must be well aware that there are several Zemindars, Enamdars, and Hukdars, [owners of dues], as well as Bara Bullottee, [the municipal village officers], who enjoy their rights, however trifling they may be, for one, two, and three hundred years, and who know very little of sunnuds or documents; or perhaps they may have lost them. These individuals are told they will be allowed to enjoy their Enams or rights, provided they produce their sunnuds; if not, such Enams will be seized, or permitted only for their lives. What would you think the condition of the people must be under this rule? Instead of confiding in the British Government for protection, such treatment must lead the people to open their eyes, and the result is not known at this time. The Company's Government, instead of giving protection, itself becomes the usurper of individual rights and property."

# INDIA REFORM.

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No. VIII.

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## PUBLIC WORKS.

LONDON:  
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1853.

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*Price Threepence.*



# INDIA REFORM.

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# INDIA REFORM.

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## PUBLIC WORKS.

IF the twenty years just expired had produced no other results in India than to show that under the despotic rule of civilised conquerors, the material improvement of that country has decreased and fallen far below the level which it held under ruder governors, they would deserve to rank as an era of disgrace and shame in the annals of the nineteenth century.

We know from history and the testimony of eye-witnesses, that India before our conquest was traversed in all directions by works of irrigation and canalization. The productions of the soil, fostered by those artificial improvements, had a continual increase, the surplus of which was enabled to find a market at a distance. A broad and comprehensive system of intercommunication favoured the progress of internal trade. By stimulating agriculture and enriching the people, it enabled them to bear taxation. External commerce profited by the opening, and naturally produced interchange. Under British rule, the broad thoroughfares which stretched over India were permitted to decay. Trade diminished—where there were roads, they were effectually closed by transit duties and internal customs regulations. The productions of the country gradually decreased—works of irrigation and canalization, instead of being a source of revenue, became a drain upon the purse of those who could no longer find a profitable market for their produce. They fell into disuse, and thus the territories of India—which in

almost the whole of their extent might be made as fertile as Lower Egypt—offered to the world the spectacle of a country without roads, in most parts lying waste, giving feeble sustenance to a population that daily sinks into a lower state of physical degradation. Were the object of the present government of India to cripple instead of foster the productive powers of the country under its charge, it could not have acted with more method or foresight than by neglecting to give the people the means of extended intercommunication, increased trade, and material improvement.

When Turgot was appointed superintendent to the poorest province in the kingdom of France (Limoges), he found it surrounded by barriers which impeded the natural interchange of commodities with neighbouring departments. The roads within had fallen into disrepair; the poor, no longer able to bear taxation, were ripe for revolution. Turgot opened the custom-houses, made the roads, and in the course of a few years the poorest province in France became the happiest and most contented, and for a moment the richest. Promoted to the highest power in the state, Turgot endeavoured to extend throughout the kingdom the benefits which he had so happily imparted to a single province. He failed, and France was overturned by the revolution. India no longer groans under the system of internal customs; transit duties have at length been abolished, but there are no roads—no works of irrigation, no bridges in number or importance commensurate with the immensity of the territory which is under our sway, or the number of the people which inhabit it. It is high time that a change should be made ere a catastrophe is unavoidable.

That India in the olden time was covered with works of public utility is matter of notoriety. There were numerous roads planted with trees along their sides for many miles throughout the whole of Hindostan\*—the works of ancient Mahomedan emperors, who, if they did not sanction or encourage foreign commerce with the same vigour as Christian rulers, were fully alive to the advantages of internal traffic.

\* Briggs, Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 146.

Their system of amelioration was also vastly broader than ours ; for irrigation—an important part of the process of agriculture in India—and the most ancient mode of increasing the fertility of the country,\* “was so rigidly attended to, that the fees for wells and artificial reservoirs were always deducted from the produce of every village before the government claim was paid.” Throughout the whole of Central and South India especially, these works existed in vast numbers. “From Ganjam to Cape Comorin the most extraordinary remains of tanks are found that it is possible to conceive; the native governments carrying their operations upon that point so far as to divert whole streams like the Vyjahaur into one or more reservoirs.”† In Candeish, where fertile cotton ground exists, and along the banks of the river Taptee, these works to an almost unexampled extent are traceable, but have nearly disappeared or fallen into disuse.‡ The Delta of the Godavery is covered with such ruins, and generally throughout Madras one-fifth alone of the ancient fertilising works are now in use,§ though that province is dependent more than any other on the benefits of irrigation, which, where they are extended, have never failed to produce increased revenue. Indeed, the richness and productiveness of land from the slightest measure of improvement is evident to the commonest understanding. Nor can we give a stronger instance than that which is exhibited in the countries on both banks of the Tomboodra, where the richness and fertility which they present; being solely the effect of the noble works constructed by the ancient Hindoo princes, may, when contrasted with the unprotected borders of the same river where such works are not in action, be adduced as a practical illustration of what is to be expected from the embankment of streams and other works of irrigation.||

Unable to preserve, the East India Company has failed as signally in creating or producing fresh improvements. The roads, avenues, and caravanserais, now scarcely traceable; the tanks and reservoirs, left to perish, have been most imperfectly, or in

\* Brown, *Ev. Cotton Rep.*, 1848, p. 270. † Brown, *Ibid.*, p. 270.

‡ Giberne, *Ibid.*, p. 209. § Madras Petition to Parliament.

|| Memorial of Bombay merchants, 1850.

nowise replaced by newer works ; and everywhere the presence of a ruin tells the tale of ancient splendour and modern weakness.

That these are not the vain assertions of captious opposition is proved by the admission of all the friends of those who now endeavour to perpetuate abuses. Does not Mr. Mangles, their strenuous supporter, admit "that the sums expended in physical improvements are disproportionately small ; that they should be made much larger, and that the application of such increased amount to the improvement of communications and means of irrigation, whether annually out of revenue or by special loans, would probably become the most profitable of the Company's investments." \* Does not he accuse the East India House of supineness, and convict it of neglect, when he "is quite ready to admit that the government of India has not done what he thinks might and ought to have been done in public works."

Is Mr. Marriott friendly to them when he says, "The duty of the government is to attend to making roads and irrigating land. They are practically both sovereign and landholders, and ought to expend a portion of the rent and a portion of the taxes." †

We might multiply examples of partisans of the Indian government shrinking from palliation of a system which tends to India's ruin ; but need we further go than quote the author of a recent pamphlet, whose pride impels him to confess that "money has been spent on wars, and not on works." ‡

In truth, it is of great advantage to get at these admissions, for were we forced to trust for information as to what the Company expends upon the various branches of establishment to the accounts which they deign to publish, we should seek in vain to give complete or lucid information.

The accounts of the East India Company are a sort of labyrinth from which it is not easy to find an exit. So disordered amongst others is the department to which has been entrusted the labours of making roads, canals, and works of irrigation, that it remains impossible to ascertain, after the most careful investi-

\* Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 402.

† *Ibid.*, p. 424.

‡ Prinsep, India Question, pp. 74—5.

gation that can be made, how much has actually been spent upon them since the renewal of their charter in 1834; nor are the sources elsewhere laid open for public information more trustworthy or complete. The maps of India which have recently been published, however much they may impose by their appearance upon observant eyes, are entirely unsafe to show the number and direction of those public ways by which, since 1834, the carriage transport of agricultural produce and of merchandise have, or ought to have, been rendered practicable; for most of them either do not exist at all, or are only serviceable under certain happy conditions of season and of weather.

But however confused and faulty the accounts and maps of the East India Company, we shall not fail to draw even from their discrepant and overcharged details the most powerful conclusions as to the supineness of the government, and expose the reckless and culpable mode in which they have conducted their affairs.

And first, let us endeavour to extract what has really been the outlay throughout the whole of India, upon public works; for the confusion in which these all-important facts are involved, has been made the means, and taken advantage of, in the Court of Proprietors within the walls of Parliament, and in two recent publications emanating from the India House, to magnify the total sum expended into one so large as will (so it is asserted) remove, the stain of half a century's neglect of those mighty means, the speedy use of which alone can give a reasonable hope of the improvement of millions of our Asiatic subjects, on whose behalf a degree of interest has, at the eleventh hour, been awakened in this country never, it is hoped, again to slumber.

This attempt to overcharge the picture of Indian wealth and happiness will be found too flimsy to avert the public eye from the evils which lie beneath, and which, as early as 1830, elicited from Sir Robert Peel words which are still too true not to command attention:—

“On the commercial part of the question, I refrain from giving an opinion, whilst, on that which I admit to be the most important of all—the welfare of the people of India—I cannot too strongly urge the propriety of endeavouring, whilst keeping them

under British rule, to atone to them for the suffering they endured, and the wrongs to which they were subjected, in being reduced to that rule; and so afford them such advantages, and confer on them such benefits, as may in some degree console them for the loss of their independence.” \*

Here then are the figures from which we have to draw conclusions as to the present and past expenditure on public works in India. They are taken from three sources; firstly, the statements annually prepared at the India House, and printed by order of the House of Commons. Secondly, the statistical papers printed in 1853, for the Court of Directors; and thirdly, the Blue Book on public works in India, published in August, 1851, by order of the House of Commons:—

	£	s.	d.
It appears, from the first of those statements, that the outlay on public works, exclusive of repairs, was, for the fourteen years ending 1850—51, 277,11,516 rupees, averaging per annum . . . . .	197,936	0	0
From the second statement,† that the expense incurred during the same fourteen years, for roads, bridges, embankments, canals, works of irrigation, tanks or wells, exclusive of superintendence, 380,24,631 rupees, averaging per annum . . . . .	271,604	0	0
From the third,‡ that the whole outlay during ten years for works of all kinds in the civil department, but not corresponding ones, was 346,09,297 rupees, averaging per annum . . . . .	346,092	0	0

Such glaring discrepancies in accounts, of which the whole were published by authority, suggest that a remedy should be found in future, by legislative enactment. Meanwhile, the very grave question naturally arises, under what head, in the annual amounts laid before Parliament, are debited these enormous differences, varying from 73,668*l.* to 148,000*l.* per annum on a gross calculation, thus vitiating not only these but a large portion of the remaining charges in those parliamentary statements. If mystification was the object, no more successful means could possibly be devised for its accomplishment. One great fact, however, remains without

\* Speech of Sir R. Peel, Feb. 9, 1830.

† P. 89.

‡ P. 208.

dispute, when we contemplate these figures. It is that inclusive of repairs and supervision the Indian treasury has actually expended on public works throughout the whole of its gigantic territories no greater sum than 846,092*l.* per annum up to 1848.

If now we seek to find what has been spent on supervision, we may obtain a slight idea of the actual disbursement on public works of every kind. But here the cleverness of the East India Company in publishing accounts might slightly baffle us, if we had not other means of approximating to what we seek; for in no single instance can we find it specified:—

First. What has been the expense incurred in superintendence.

Secondly. What on repairs.

Thirdly. What in sums, which are lost completely to the public, from the defects of the present system, involving, as we shall show, the utter incompetency of those to whom have been confided many costly and scientific works.

That the outlay under the first of these heads has been enormously great may be inferred from the review of its amount in the Presidencies of Bombay and Bengal, respecting which we are happy in discovering that the Company's own servants have recorded their opinions. In the report on public works in India,\* above referred to, Sir George Clerk, then Governor of Bombay, thus records his intimate conviction of the value of the civil department of public works:—

“My objections to the continuance of the Road and Tank Department have been formed after much observation of its defects; these, among others, are inutility and costliness. These my objections, are insuperable, because founded on its enormous waste of public money during ten years, and on its entire disregard, during the whole period, of that important means of fertilising our territories, which was one of the two purposes for which ostensibly it was instituted, and which, it is quite evident, it has never been capable of applying.”

“The expense of the department for superintendence was stated by the chief engineer, in 1844, to have been, for the nine years of existence, 72,792*l.* Within the same period, the total expenditure

\* India Public Works, 1851, p. 149.



on tanks has been 4200*l.*, a great portion of which has been lost by the failure of the works. The value of the department was, therefore, to be sought only in the road branch of its services; in this the charge for superintendence had been about 50 per cent. on the work performed."

True it is that two statements of the expenditure for the years 1845 and 1846 are brought forward in the same book, to show that the charge for superintendence averaged only 23 per cent. for those years, but we have reason to know, that had the series for nine years laying on the same shelf of the India House been referred to in elucidation of this point, more than three times this amount would, in some instances, have met the eye.

That a disproportionate outlay, for superintendence, has been incurred at Bengal, is placed beyond a doubt. Again, referring to the report we have just quoted,\* we find an entry as to the expenses of the Agra and Bombay road, which is as follows:—

#### AGRA AND BOMBAY ROAD.

	£	s.	d.
Before sanctioned . . . . .	19,005	0	0
Add expenditure to Nov., 1847, as follows:—			
New work of Road . . . . .	19,431	0	0
Superintendence . . . . .	13,110	0	0
Repairs and contingencies . . . . .	4,754	0	0
	37,295	0	0

Making for the cost of supervision, in this instance, 26 per cent.

From the above, and only data as yet placed before the public, on which to calculate the cost of superintendence, it would therefore seem under the most favourable review of the above expenditure, that 33 per cent. is the average amount in Bengal and Bombay. Taking it to be no higher in Madras than in the two other presidencies, we must extract 33 per cent., or one-third, for supervision, from the total expended on public works, which is thus reduced to 230,667*l.* per annum.

Considerable as is this item in the disbursement for public works, we are grieved to add that, in the review to which we shall now proceed, of what has been lost to the public from a defective

\* India Public Works, p. 148.

system, involving the incompetency of those to whom the execution of so many of these works has been confided, the conviction is forced upon us, that a fearful addition to it has been so occasioned, in support of which may be quoted, from the Blue Book already referred to, the premature destruction of numerous bridges, owing to defective construction. Of the extent in other parts of India to which the public has suffered, from the like misappropriation of the fund set apart for public works, an opinion may be formed from the following extracts of a dispatch from the Court of Directors, under date, 1850, to the Government of India, the contents of which seem generally applicable to the whole of the territories under our charge.

"The letter," says the Court, "dated 3rd January, 1849, transmits a general report of the Board Department from its establishment to the 1st May, 1848, and the orders passed thereon by the government.

"The whole of the proceedings referred to in these letters lead to the following conclusions.

"The roads, in some instances, from want of previous survey, and other causes, have not been well planned with respect to the line, so that a road on a new line becomes desirable, and even necessary for permanent traffic.

"They have been carried below the level of the tanks, when they might have been carried above it, and embankments have been broken and bridges carried away by inundations, which, on the higher line, would have been comparatively innocuous.

"They have been constructed without due provision for their permanent maintenance, so that either the entire road has gone to decay, or one portion of it has become unserviceable, while another portion was in progress of construction.

"The reports of all the superintendents dwell much on the necessity of having properly qualified assistants, capable of enduring the climate, and conversing with the natives. The local experience of the ryot, it is observed, is often of great value, and is lost to those who cannot communicate with him in his own language.

"The want of properly qualified subordinates, and in addition to the want of qualification, in the frequent illness and

frequent removal, and change of European assistants, is strongly dwelt on by all the authorities who have recorded opinions on the subjects previously noticed. These circumstances are placed most prominently forward as a principal cause of all the failures and disappointments, the combined costliness and inefficiency, which have been experienced in a greater or less degree in all the subjects of our previous examinations.

“Bridges, embankments, annicuts, though essentially connected with, and indeed component portions of roads, and canals of irrigation, are severally in themselves great branches of practical engineering, and in all these, separately considered, the inefficiency of subordinate agency has been experienced, to which may be added: The delay in passing estimates, whereby the sanction for emergent work is frequently not given till it is too late in the season to execute it.”

Such is the judgment passed on the public work departments in each of the presidencies by the authorities at home.

Other testimony might be quoted to the wasteful expenditure for superintendence during the period under review, much of which we are justified in ascribing not to the want of timely and urgent representations on the part of the local governments directed to its prevention and remedy; but to the delayed and still imperfect training of the natives (except by fits and starts under an Elphinstone, a Malcolm, a Bird, but let us hope with more enduring fruits under a Thomason) for filling some of the higher grades in this department of the public service; for it is undeniable that one engineer officer might, with the aid of a sufficient number of qualified native assistants, exercise efficient supervision over a greater range of territory, whilst others in charge of less considerable works, which might, as in the case of the judicial department, be confided to native supervision, could be made available for those more important undertakings so frequently delayed or not commenced for the want of scientific European officers to conduct them.

For seventeen years past, according to the statistical papers laid before Parliament, the amount expended for works of improvement throughout India was 2,888,332*l.*, a sum which elsewhere has

been swollen to five million sterling. Of this a large portion must be placed to the account of obligatory repairs, as much an essential condition of receiving the revenue as the Ryots' expenses of cultivation. Another still larger portion is expended on works which are never undertaken except as a pecuniary speculation, certain to return an usurious interest for the money so expended. Such works are not to be placed in the same category as those like roads and bridges which benefit the public without being of the same direct advantage to their authors; particularly because such works of irrigation do not diminish, but rather increase the necessity for roads, while they at the same time create a capital for their formation. Deducting therefore that portion of it applied to obligatory and unavoidable purposes, it will be found from the statistical papers already referred to, that the annual amount allotted for roads and bridges, dwindles down, exclusively of superintendence, to 137,555*l.*, one-third of which being required for their repairs, there remains 90,000*l.*, equivalent to one-half of 1 per cent. of the net revenue, as the measure of gratuitous outlay per annum for construction of roads and bridges throughout India. Nor can we discover anything to show that during peace the expenditure on public works throughout India has been greater than it was during war. On the contrary: It seems that during the first five years of the present charter (we quote the statistical papers already referred to), the expenditure for public works throughout India, exclusive of repairs, was on an average 105,798*l.* per annum; which, compared with the general average for the last seventeen years, already quoted, will show a decrease for those years of 31,755*l.* per annum. This result has been carefully kept out of sight in the official reviews of Indian affairs. These being the only five consecutive years in which there was no war, *the public works may be said to have been literally starved for the sake of swelling a boasted surplus, at the very moment when money should have been more bountifully laid out upon their vigorous prosecution.*

## BENGAL AND THE NORTH WEST.

HAVING thus exposed the short comings of the East India Company upon the grand total of its expenditure, if we condescend to enter into details, we find the case against them gaining greater strength and consistency. The neglect and indifference exhibited generally become more glaring as we get to details; for here at least we have been able to do for ourselves what the East India Company should have done for us, viz., separate from the grand total of expenditure on public improvement what has actually been disbursed on *bonâ fide* works for the amelioration of the people's lot—such as canals, embankments, and roads, and bridges,—and what on civil and political buildings which are not conducive to the increased prosperity and welfare of our Indian population. We are still unable, however, to distinguish what has been disbursed upon repairs and supervision severally, though we get the total upon that double item.

The grand total of expenditure on public works in the Bengal and North-west Presidency, inclusive of works, salaries, establishments, &c., within the civil department, is stated in the Report on India Public Works, to be, for ten years ending 1848—9 . . . . . £2,236,532

Or at the rate of £223,653 per annum.

Eliminating all other items but those under the heads of roads and bridges, and including repairs, we find the sum expended upon these to be, during the same period . . . . £944,850

Or at the rate of £94,485 per annum.

Eliminating all the items but those under the heads of canals, embankments, and irrigation, we find the sum expended upon these to be, during the same period . . . . £519,228

Or at the rate of £51,922 per annum.

Eliminating all other items but those under the head of civil and political buildings, we find the sum expended upon these during the same period . . . . £306,206

The remainder, being for supervision alone, we find to be . . . £376,248

Total £2,386,532

Roads, bridges, canals, embankments, and irrigation, have thus cost in Bengal and the North West for ten years up to 1848-9, 1,464,078*l.*, out of a net revenue of 130 millions, or at the rate of about 146,407*l.* per annum, for a population of sixty-four millions, which yields a net revenue of thirteen millions sterling per annum.

But let us now proceed to examine in detail what has actually been done for Bengal and the North West with such a very small sum of money.

The great result of the efforts made by the East India Company up to the present time has been to produce one incomplete line of communication between Calcutta and Delhi, and to make two abortive attempts at communication with the great cotton fields of Western India. Throughout the remaining portion of the territory under their charge, there may be numerous tracks for a few miles on either side of a military or civil station, or bridges may exist here and there; but where there are tracks even passably kept in order, there are usually no bridges, and where bridges do exist, the roads remain unmetalled, and the bridge consequently unapproachable.

The works of intercommunication in Bengal and the North West being in this state, it may be easily conceived with what astonishment a speech made by the Chairman of the East India Company on the subject in 1850 must have been received throughout the whole of India. It elicited at the time the following observations from the "Friend of India:"—

"The previous mail brought us the report of a speech delivered by the Chairman of the East India Company relative to the expenditure of Government in India on public works; and we will venture to affirm that no statement from the India House has ever been received in this country with greater astonishment and incredulity. It appears that some Proprietor had ventured to give utterance in the Court to that opinion regarding the culpable indifference of the rulers of India to works of public utility, which is universally entertained in this country. On this, the Chairman deemed it necessary to rebuke him for his ignorance and presumption. He told the Proprietors that the roads in the

Bombay Presidency, more especially in the cotton districts, were in most excellent order. He then proceeded to assert that from 1838 to 1846, a period of nine years, no less a sum than 2,282,894*l.* had been laid out in roads, bridges, and embankments. Within the same space, 970,000*l.* had been assigned for the Ganges canal, 50,000*l.* for the embankment of the Godavery, and 1,500,000*l.* for railways. Thus, in nine years, the expenditure of the East India Company on public works amounted to 4,862,894*l.*, besides other sources of outlay belonging to the same category. This was exclusive of the cost of convict labour on the public roads, which he believed would increase the amount one-fourth.

"Here we are informed that in nine years the Government of India, independent of the expenses of the Ganges Canal, the labour of convicts on public works and the district roads, has laid out 228 lakhs of rupees on roads, bridges, canals, and embankments. The sum expended in this latter department was recently given to the public through the report of the Embankment Committee. It amounted in ten years to 192,21,000 rupees, leaving 208 lakhs to be accounted for in roads, bridges, and canals. The only road at this Presidency deserving the name is the grand trunk road from Calcutta to Meerut; a magnificent undertaking, though its magnificence appears chiefly by comparison with the wretched paths in other parts of the country which are dignified by the name of roads. We have made it our business carefully and diligently to notice every public work which has been executed at the expense of the State in India during the period under review;—from their extreme rarity, indeed, they can scarcely escape notice—and we are sure we can appeal to every one who reads this letter, whether, if he were told that even one-half this sum had been expended in these objects between 1837 and 1846, he would not consider that a very unusual and unreasonable demand has been made on his faith. When we are told of hundreds of lakhs having been expended on roads, bridges, &c., we naturally inquire where are the roads? Throughout the east of Bengal, they are in so utterly disgraceful a state, that it is a misnomer to call them roads. We question whether they will

stand a comparison with those which existed in England at the revolution of 1688. With the exception of one or two roads in the two provinces of B ngal and Beh r, there is nothing but the vestiges or the tradition of roads. The high road which runs from Calcutta through Santipore, to Moorshedabad, Rajinabal, and Monghyr through three hundred miles of country, even the poorest and most niggardly of civilised governments would be ashamed to own. The lower provinces present the aspect of an estate in Chancery, or in the hands of an insolvent landlord. And where are the bridges, which have been erected during this period? Where can a single bridge be pointed out which has cost even 50,000*l*? The bridge on the great trunk road at Mugra, within forty miles of Calcutta, was washed away by the floods four years ago, and has not been replaced to this day,—because the treasury was said to be empty. The immense traffic of this road, the great artery of this Presidency, has long been carried over a bridge of rickety boats, which cost less than 100*l*., and hundreds of carts are daily taxed for the use of it. And where are the canals which have been excavated during this period of nine years?

“As to the one-fourth additional sum, which is said to have been laid out in district roads, not one farthing has been drawn from the Imperial revenue. A small annual sum has been obtained from a tax on ferrics, and appropriated to this object; but the whole amount of expenditure last year on the district roads of thirty-two zillahs, and in a country more populous than England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, did not exceed the paltry sum of 23,000*l*! Even the arrears of the old Ferry Fund, which was pledged to local improvements when it was established, have been carried to the credit of the State, to the extent of 70,000*l*., and every effort to recover them for the roads have hitherto proved ineffectual.”

The great trunk road from Calcutta has been but just completed, with the exception of the bridges over the Soane and Jumna, though it has been marked out since 1795. For the period during which these works proceeded, the estimates were continually overstepped. Floods destroyed the work in numerous places, where



the carelessness or ignorance of overseers had left the causeways unprotected. The deficiencies in the execution were, in fact, so glaring, that the superintendent, Captain Willis, reporting to the Court, recapitulated the following list of causes contributing to the non-completion of the road:—

“The ignorance of overseers; the increase of work from unprecedented floods in 1845; the delay in passing estimates; the ignorance of accounts of one executive officer; the dilatoriness of another; the increase of the superintendent’s charge; the alteration of limits, causing delay in transfer of duty; the absconding of workmen from unhealthy districts; and the illness of many overseers.” \*

Here was one of the most important works ever undertaken in India intrusted to incompetent men, and a general looseness of administration, visible from the highest place, where the estimates were to be passed, to the lowest, where the workmen absconded, on the plea of ill health. The wonder was that under such circumstances the work should ever have been completed. It appears from General Briggs’ evidence,† that even where the road was finished, something had to be done to it afresh every year, yet it was unfit for carts to travel on, and was never used in that way until quite lately, on the whole distance between Benares and Calcutta. The bridges were the last thing attended to in the making of the communication, so that instead of methodical proceeding, pieces of road were constructed here and there between streams, and were consequently of no use whatever. Nay, so great had been the early carelessness of the Company, that up to 1831, no drains were built at the sides to carry off the water, so that after every monsoon there was a necessary expenditure of 4000*l.* to keep in order the almost neglected portions of what ought to have been a frequented road; and this in a country where the least foresight would have dictated caution and prudence; for it is well known that the ground between Benares and Calcutta is extremely difficult, about 120 miles of it being subject to inundations from the periodical swelling of the Damsdur and other rivers—streams one day, and impassable torrents the next. The disgraceful careless-

\* India Public Works, 1851, p. 146.

† Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 402.

ness of these proceedings was completed by the entire absence at the time, when no bridges existed, of all means of passing rivers by boats, or when the torrents no longer flowed, of removing the obstacles in the shape of stones and rubbish, which entirely impeded passage of any kind. In 1831, the only bridge on the road was that on the Kharamassa, made by the charity of an individual in Benares, at the cost of 20,000*l*.

Under such circumstances it was not extraordinary that the expenses vastly exceeded the estimates. The expenditure up to April, 1845, was 384,148*l*.; in the three years succeeding, it was increased by 105,010*l*., making a total expenditure, up to 1848, of 489,110*l*. The estimate made in 1846 for completing the works, was 1,030,250*l*.; thus, in two years, 880,000*l*. were added to these estimates. The road is now completed after a fashion, the bridges on the Jumna and Soane being not even commenced, under pretext that a railway is about to be built, of which the works are proceeding at less than snail's pace. By this means the important town of Delhi remains without any convenient mode of passing the important traffick which comes through it from east and west, and the military post of Meerut is cut off from improved communication.

Of the great Deccan road, which is ultimately to join Calcutta and the cotton districts about Oomrawutty, and extending from Mirzapore to Jubbulpore and Nagpore, only 240 miles between Mirzapore and Jubbulpore are completed; for though the track is carried on to Nagpore, it is unfit for vehicles at all times and for every sort of traffic in bad weather.

In 1840 it was determined to improve, or rather make the road between Agra and Bombay; the improvements to comprise the removal of the principal obstructions in the Ghaut, jungles and passages of river, nullahs, or mountain streams. The track passed through Indore 370 miles, thence to Akberpore, on the Nerbudda, 51 miles, on to Sindwa, 43 miles, and thence to Bombay, 270 miles, making a grand total of 734 miles. Major Drummond was commissioned to survey the line from Agra as far as the Nerbudda, and the Government, on the 30th June, 1840, sanctioned an estimate of 12,000*l*. for improving the nearest part of the road

between the Chambul river and Suppur, 115½ miles, and between Indore and the Nerbudda river, 76 miles, so as to be practicable for wheeled carriages. An increase in the width of the Ghauts, or passes, from ten to fourteen feet, was also authorised in 1843. Notwithstanding these laudable exertions, after the expenses of the survey had been gone to, it appeared that in 1843 no material portion of the road or track had been improved, and an estimate being then called for, it was discovered that upwards of 70,000*l.* would be required to complete one distance of 93 miles, under the charge of the civil engineer, to bridge a portion of the road between Soonghur and Dhoolia, and to metal the road in Candeish. This estimate so frightened the East India Company, that the works were declared too costly to be undertaken, and a sum of 3291*l.* only was sanctioned, for converting into a fair weather road the line between Sindwa and the Nerbudda, and for the maintenance of the present line of road within the Bengal Presidency. This portion from Agra to Akburpore on the Nerbudda, was projected at a proposed cost of 12,000*l.*, but in November had cost 35,495*l.*, 19,431*l.* having been spent on new work to replace the old; this new work costing, in fact, more than the first estimate for the entire road. The sanction of the Court of Directors is now asked for an annual expenditure of 2870*l.*\*

From Agra to Delhi there may be a road, but there are neither drains nor bridges on it. An estimate for spending 1488*l.* in providing both these necessities on a distance of 102 miles, seems to have met with approval, but as yet not to have been carried out. However, this perhaps will be considered less necessary on account of the completion on the other side of the Jumna of the grand trunk road, from Allahabad to Delhi, which, as we have said, has but just been finished.

If, however, the indirect communication with Calcutta is likely to be long incomplete, should the present arrangements of the Company remain in force, it is still more likely to be constructed than the direct road between Calcutta and Bombay. It will hardly be credited, that at this moment there is no road from

\* Public Works, India, 1861, p. 148.

Calcutta to Bombay practicable to carriages. In 1837-38, the Bombay Government suggested that the road through Raipore and Oolabareah, about 1200 miles, direct to Calcutta *via* Ahmednuggur, should be improved, in order that the overland communication with England might be made easy to travellers, and rapid for the conveyance of the mails. The resident at Nagpore reported that the Rajah, through whose territory this road would pass, was willing to subscribe 2000*l.* towards the completion of the road. The plans submitted were two,—first, for the construction of a road at all times practicable for wheel-carriages for travellers, and for a transit of trade between Bombay and Calcutta; second, to facilitate the conveyance of mails between the capitals, by rendering the line of communication practicable for horsemen or foot-runners. Of the 1200 miles, 232 had been made practicable for horsemen and dawk runners, by means of a grant of 2036 rupees, and 968 miles remained. As the plans involved a large outlay, the Court were desirous that no portion of the line should be commenced until a more satisfactory survey could be made, and an estimate of the expense submitted; but as the main road to Bombay could not be completed for some years, the Government were authorised to take immediate steps for forming a road for horsemen and dawk runners from Ahmednuggur to Midnapore, which would be practicable throughout the year. The Court subsequently informed the Government that they could not sanction the construction of an extensive road, and directed that their exertions be confined to the discovery of the best route, on which such improvements only should be made as the transit of the mails imperatively required.\* It is needless to remark that the discovery has never yet been made, and that the communication between Calcutta and Bombay is still on the antiquated footing of dawks as far as Aurungabad. That this system is one involving frequently the highest consequences is evident from an episode of the time when the Company carried on that glorious and destructive war on the Sutlej.

During the campaign of 1846, 100 officers were required to be

\* Public Works, India, p. 127.

sent from Calcutta, 1500 miles, to the field of action. Palanquins were the only conveyance. On that occasion, however, bearers were posted at different stations to carry three persons daily; and assuming twelve bearers to be posted at every station, and eight miles between each, it must have required 7200 men to carry them. Of the 100 only 30 arrived before the campaign was over. They were going to the Sutlej to join Lord Hardinge.\*

The whole of the Bombay and Calcutta road within the Bengal Presidency is impracticable to carriages, the line, like all customary routes, being worn into the appearance of a track, on which, says Mr. Chapman, the mode of travelling is as bad as can be imagined. The very poorest classes subsist during the journey on little more than the food they bring from home. The classes next above them spend from a farthing to a penny per mile; and another class from a penny to threepence and fourpence per mile. The quickest travelling is four miles an hour.†

Such being the state of the main trunk roads in the Presidency of Bengal and the north-west, it may be easily conceived that district roads are in yet smaller number, and in a far worse state. It does not appear, even from the evidence of the East India officials themselves, that there is a single continued line of inter-communication which is fairly practicable in fine weather. The only boast which the Company seems to be able to make is, that the roads in Assam are in a better state of repair than the rest, and that on the line from Gowahatty to the Kulling river, one of the most frequented roads in Assam, and important in a military point of view, there is a permanent road passable throughout the year to horsemen and cattle over 32 stone bridges and 118 wooden ones.

But if roads and bridges in the Presidency of Bengal may be said not to exist at all, perhaps it may be discovered that more attention has been paid to navigation. Roads may have been neglected, yet canals have been improved and multiplied. The Company have planned and partially advanced, but not yet completed, the Ganges Canal suggested in 1836 by Captain Chutley, and having for its object the making of the waters of the

\* Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 146.

† Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 340.

Ganges available for navigation on the eastern side of the Doab. This noble work, when it is completed, will be the only claim on the part of the East India Company to the gratitude of the people of the North-west Provinces; but even in the progress of this work we discover the hesitation, poorness of spirit, and want of vigour of the administration. The canal was planned to leave the Ganges at Kunkul, pass near Meerut and Coel, and finally join the river Esau near Mynpoore. The length of the main line was 453 miles. Branches to Futtyghur, 160 miles; to Boolundshuhur, 70 miles; Etawah, 172; and Cawnpore,  $42\frac{1}{2}$  miles, make a grand total of 898 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The estimated amount for completion was 666,522*l.*, exclusive of the sum which would be required for an aqueduct over the Solani River, which is to be avoided by a circuitous route if required. The works were of an expensive kind; it was necessary first to convey the water from the Ganges at Kunkul, to Roorkee, a distance of 20 miles, by an expensive series of works estimated at 196,437*l.*, of which 86,366*l.* was for the aqueduct over the Solani. The 230 miles from Roorkee to Cawnpore, the canal having a mean breadth of 150 feet, was estimated at a cost of 283,628*l.*; the rest of the total sum being counted on to complete the branches. The works were commenced and progressed, when, in 1842, a sudden stop was put to them by order of the Governor-General; but they were resumed in June of the same year, when, at first, 20,000*l.*, and in 1844, 30,000*l.*, were sanctioned for annual expenditure. The amount expended up to the 1st of April, 1848, being about 200,000*l.* or 25,000*l.* a-year, in a Presidency which produces a net revenue of 13,000,000*l.* per annum.

With the exception of the Ganges Canal the Company has spent in ten years, up to 1848, no more than 310,000*l.* on a gross computation, the greater part of which was for embankments to protect property from inundation, some for the purposes of irrigation, and the rest for improving the Doab Canal, making plantations on the Delhi Canal, and generally keeping in order those two great and ancient works.

Since then, it is true, some progress has been made with the public works on the Punjaub, for which, at the demand of

Lord Dalhousie, the Company were prevailed upon to sanction in 1849, an annual expenditure of five lacs of rupees; but we know that the haste with which this large sum of money was granted arose from paramount motives of policy. The Court of Directors itself stated, in a letter of the 5th December, 1849, that it noticed "as a strong ground for giving the utmost practicable encouragement to the proposed measures of irrigation in the Punjaub, the circumstances narrated by Major Napier in reference to the extension of the Huslee Canal that, surrounded by the most luxuriant cultivation, the canal villages and their inhabitants bore every appearance of comfort and ease; there was scarcely a discharged soldier to be found in them, as the cultivation afforded ample occupation for the population, whilst the poor villages in the dry tracts between Lahore and Kussoor, with their small patches of cultivation, hardly wrought from wells more than 60 feet deep, were full of the discharged Khalsa." \*

In the absence of all other motives than those of the immediate improvement of the people of the country, the question naturally suggests itself: What has become of the plan for joining by canals the Hooghly and the Ganges, and that for the repair of the Mofussil canals, so loudly called for—and for that of Rajmahal, the cost of which is only estimated at 380,000*l.*, and which, by superseding the changeableness and uncertainty of the Nudda rivers, would reduce to 208 miles the journey of 528 now forcibly performed by the Soonderbund route; and, finally, what has been done towards making the Rohilcund Canal? And is it not notorious (as the petition of the Calcutta missionaries and ministers states) that in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta the two canals by which, during eight months of the year, the great majority of boats approach or leave the commercial capital of India, are utterly inadequate to the traffic of which they are the channels.

\* Public Works, India, 1851, p. 212.

## MADRAS.

NOWHERE throughout India are the changes in the aspect of a country, incident to droughts and floods, more marked than in Madras. The Godavery, rising near Bombay, passes for several hundred miles through an open country, watered chiefly by the south-west monsoon, and after passing the mountainous region of the Circars, enters the alluvial country of its own formation, 60 miles from the sea. The stream divides itself about 35 miles from the coast, extending on the west till it reaches the Delta of the Kistnah, on the Colair Lake, about 40 miles, and, stretching on the east 32 miles to the shores of Coringa Bay. This river has the advantage of lofty banks thrown up by the waters on each side of it, which form ridges of 7 to 18 feet higher than the level of the land at 2½ miles distance on either side, thus facilitating the turning of the waters by the formation of dams across the streams. The distant waters of the Godavery, those of the Kistnah, and Tomboodra, rise and fall with the monsoons, or after local rains, at one time laying enormous tracts in water, at others feebly dribbling, in comparison, along its channels, to the sea. A little lower down, the Coleroon and Cauvery form fertile deltas, and by their rise and fall dry up or inundate miles and miles of ground. To regulate and take advantage of these natural phenomena should be the part of a good government. The custom of the ancient rulers was to authorise such works as, by stopping at their highest point the waters of the rivers when the rains had swelled them, rendered them available when the currents fell. They then, by sluices, annicuts, or vast embankments, turned the water into fields, thus fertilising, throughout the year, land which could not otherwise be cultivated, the heat and drought combining to render them unproductive. This they did with most effect on the river Cauvery. Of all the ancient works of which the traces are still preserved throughout Madras, and the results of which in former



times was to make the people rich compared with what they are at present, four-fifths at least have disappeared. Embankments which confined the waters are broken through; The channels through which the waters were of old directed have been choked up, and nature has resumed the sway which art had wrested from it. The Delta of the Godavery was capable of being made the richest and most productive throughout Madras. For forty years the channels of the stream which pours its waters through the Delta, had been neglected. From fertile, rich, and populous, the country became impoverished in produce and in people. The land which, in 1803, returned revenue to the amount of 206,000*l.* produced no more in 1844 than 177,000*l.*, decreasing thus in its productive power by 29,000*l.* per annum. Its population fell in a corresponding ratio from 700,000 souls in 1828, to 400,000 in 1848,\* a gradual decline alone attributable to the culpable neglect of the East India Company. The embankments by which the crops in the lower grounds were protected from destruction by the floods, had fallen to decay. The partial dams which stopped the streams, and led the water from the river to the surface of the land, were gone. The surplus channels, for leading off superfluous waters, were choked, and there were no roads to permit the conveyance of produce to the markets and the coast, through a country impassable during rains. The consequences, fatal as they were from year to year, failed to rouse attention in the authorities. One year a portion of the entire crop of large tracts was destroyed by the floods; another year saw losses similar in character and extent, from the continued dryness of the weather, and the non-rising of streams which, if properly attended to, would suffice in any case to irrigate land ten times the extent of the Delta. At other times half the district might be suffering from local floods, whilst the remainder perished from a prevailing drought. So great was the neglect to which the streams were left, that the river-banks were swept away, and the channels consequently changed during every flood; and in the lower part of the South Godavery the whole town of Maddepollem was washed away. This neglect was the more extraordinary, as it appears that the perfect irrigation of the whole district was the simplest thing

\* Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 270.

in the world; that nothing was wanted but to ascertain the lines of channels, and plan the various masonry-works; the facilities for leading the water of the Godavery from its bed to the surface of the country being so great, that an annicut or embankment could easily have been constructed at a small expense, where it would command 2000 miles of the Delta in the Rajahmundry district alone. It is estimated that this district which only yielded, in 1844, 600,000*l.*, is capable of producing at least 4,000,000*l.*, allowing the produce of sugar cultivation alone at the rate of three-quarters of a ton per acre for 300,000 acres. Yet, with these prospects in anticipation, and these facilities in the execution, very shame alone induced the Government in 1848 to sanction the outlay of 50,000*l.* on these improvements; the urgency of which had been reported on in glowing terms by Major Cotton. The work has now been just completed by the building of an annicut right across the bed of the Godavery, with locks, head-sluiques, &c., the result of which will be the fertilising of 1,800,000 acres of land, rendered fit for the cultivation of rice and sugar, whilst there seems no reason why the waters should not be led all the way to the Kistnah, the channel terminating at that river, at 15 feet above high water. An extent of 500 square miles would thus be added, and with 500 more available upon the Colair Lake, make one single annicut at the cost of 50,000*l.*, irrigate 3000 miles of country; the highest freshes of the Godavery giving ninety times as much as would be required for the whole of this alluvial tract. The works sanctioned on the Kistnah will also be advantageous when they are completed.

That these works were not produced earlier passes comprehension; when we consider, that under the do-nothing system, water was paid for at the rate of two shillings per 800 cubic yards; that 42,000 cubic yards of water per hour were flowing useless to the sea, worth, at the above-mentioned rate, 50*l.* per hour, or 1200*l.* per diem; which, for 240 days (the portion of the year in which the district was not supplied at all), would produce 288,000*l.* a-year.\*

\* It could not be urged by the authorities that the result of these improvements was problematical, for ample experience had already

\* Reports on Irrigation of the Delta of the Godavery, p. 35.

been obtained between 1839 and 1848, by opening of channels on the Godavery in the Woondy talook, the result of which had been an increase to the yearly revenue of 1700*l.*, at the trifling cost of 700*l.*, or 256 per cent. on the outlay.\*

When such considerations as these failed to rouse the authorities, we need not wonder that the anticipation of famine, consequent upon their neglect, had no effect upon them.† Yet it is computed that the consequence of imperfect irrigation in Rajahmundry, during twenty years previous to 1845, was the loss of no less than 100,000 lives.

It is well known that rice may be selling at Madras at double its ordinary value, and be a drug at Tanjore, yet there are no means of equalising the market.

"The native merchant—inert"—says Mr. J. Thomas, of the Madras Civil Service, "waits for the monsoon." But, in truth, it is difficult for the native merchant to do otherwise. So long as roads are not made to facilitate trade, so long will famine desolate the whole of India.

Instead of finding the simple remedy of good roads for the future avoidance of such catastrophes, the Government officials can start no more refined idea than that of Government granaries. "Private enterprise," they say,‡ "is powerless to meet these emergencies. Although the trade is under British rule perfectly free, rice sells in seasons of scarcity in one district at eight or ten measures the rupee, and in another adjoining at half that cost. One explanation of this circumstance is, that there is neither enterprise nor capital in the corn trade at present adequate to meet the large and extraordinary demands of the market where famine prevails.

"The magnitude of the evil, entire districts being involved in suffering at the same moment, destroying even thousands in a few weeks . . . preclude the hope that private enterprise will be sufficient to meet the emergency.

"In the recent famine in the Madras Presidency in 1832-3, rice was at that period abundant, and comparatively cheap in Canara,

\* Reports on the Irrigation of the Delta of the Godavery, p. 41.

† *Ibid.*, p. 44.

‡ Appendix to Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 502.

Malabar, and elsewhere, in our own provinces, when the famine was at its height in Guntur, and yet no supplies reached that province." \*

Nor could it, when there were no means of intercommunication. "Roads are the only mode of averting famine, and it is folly to accuse the native dealer, when the egregious fault is in the Government. The erection of magazines would not avert a famine, but still further complicate the over-centralising system which reigns in India."

Had these glaring facts been insufficient to impress the Government with the necessity of attention to their own advantages, the irrigation of Tanjore, and its productive working, should have urged them to exertion. In truth, no more striking instance can be given of the benefits attending the simple care of keeping up a portion even of ancient works than is visible on the Cauvery. It appears that, inclusive of all improvements in the embankments, irrigations, and communication of that river, the sum of 390,000*l.* had been expended up to 1847, that is, at the rate of 8000*l.* a year. During that time the revenue increased from 314,000*l.* a year to 493,000*l.* a year, making a total increase of 170,000*l.* a year, so that with this expenditure of about 8600*l.* a year, the revenue benefited to the extent of 180,000*l.*, or altogether, 4,150,000*l.* in forty-five years.

Notwithstanding this evidence, nothing has been done to extend the advantages of irrigation to the neighbouring Coleroon, of which, says Major Cotton, at least a hundred millions of cubic yards per day are permitted to run to waste, which, if employed, could be forced to the providing of grain sufficient for two and a half millions of people. Such being the slender disbursement in the best watered provinces of Madras, it must be trifling indeed in districts which are more neglected, and, as a natural consequence, contribute in a far less degree to the revenue. The results are, immense tracts of land lying waste, whilst numerous large rivers roll their surplus waters to the sea along a coast, in length a thousand miles on the eastern side of the peninsula, dooming reclaimable land to sterility, and causing

\* Appendix to Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 502.

in great part periodical famines, decrease of trade, diminished population, and pestilence.

There is no doubt that the unwillingness of the Company to disburse even the smallest sums for the prosecution of public works has been owing to the fact, that what has been expended was unsystematically applied, and the execution of it entrusted chiefly to the Tehsildars (native collectors), almost irresponsible officers, having unlimited power, which they use in compelling the supply of labour and materials below the market price, in diminishing the quantity actually furnished by short measurement of the work performed, and in delaying the settlement of accounts indefinitely.\* It is a certain fact, that want of workmen is one great obstacle in Madras.† Of the carelessness of management and ill conduct of subordinates, the following is a not unfrequent instance:—

“That the Board may understand,”‡ says Major Cotton, “the state of things in the Rajahmundry division in respect of the execution of works, I may mention the circumstances of the Bhoopiah head-sluice. Last year, when I visited the spot, just as the freshes began, I found it had been built some weeks, and left unplastered, unprovided with shutters, and without any protection by fascine work, or anything else, from having the earth washed away from the wing walls by the heavy rush of the water in the highest freshes to which it would be exposed, as it could not be shut. In the work itself, every brick that came to hand had been used, burnt or not, so that many of them had dissolved under the first rains that had fallen. As the destruction of the sluice in this state appeared inevitable, if there was any continuance of freshes, I gave orders for the immediate transport of rough stones to place round the wing walls and below the apron; gave particular instructions where they were to be put, and left orders with the surveyor where they were to be sent. I also directed the shutters to be made, which could easily be done in a few days. When I returned after the monsoon, I found the shutters had not been made, and the stones that had been sent

\* Petition from Madras.

† Cotton's Reports on Irrigation of the Godavery.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

down had been left on the bank near the sluice, but not one been applied to the work. Thus this large new work had been in imminent danger, and has escaped from the river, having remained only one or two days at its full height."

Without commenting further upon this, we need but add the concluding words of Major Cotton:—"This was not at all a case of persons being particularly inefficient; on the contrary, they were rather better than ordinary."

This neglect and dishonesty is the more disheartening when it is known that an impost is annually levied upon the Ryots for the repair of the river runs and channels, these being a distinct charge consolidated on the land assessments for the use of the water.

We have dwelt thus long upon the subject of irrigation in the Presidency of Madras, as it is the question on which most stress must certainly be laid. But, in truth, amelioration in this one branch of public works is comparatively useless without the benefit of roads or inland water communication. Some feeble attempts by individuals have shown that the waters of the Godavery were navigable for an immense distance inland; and we have it, on the authority of Major Cotton, that not a single fall is to be found in the passage of that river through the Circars; but though teak rafts and flat-bottomed boats annually make their way down to Coringa, the navigation of the Godavery is but a myth, nor is there any mode of inland water communications in the Presidency except it be the Backwater round Cochin, of which not one tithe the use it might be put to has yet been made. Roads then are the more necessary in Madras, that there is a total want of any other mode of intercommunication, but truth compels us to assert, that throughout the greater part of it there is no parallel to the neglect and recklessness with which this branch of public works has been attended.

In the number of principal or trunk roads set down in the Return of Public Works, printed by the House in 1851, as eleven, very few are finished; not one is in an efficient state of repair. The only road constantly in good order is from Fort

St. George to the head-quarters of artillery at St. Thomas's Mount a distance of eight miles. The longest road, from Madras to Calcutta, 900 miles, has never been completed. A few miles from Madras it is not distinguishable from paddy-fields; and piece goods have to be brought on the heads of coolies to Nellore, 100 miles on this very road. Fifty miles farther, it passes over a wide swamp, causing carts and travellers to skirt its edge in mud and water, as well as they can, during six months of the year. On another portion of the line, near Rajahmundry, a gentleman was lately four hours in travelling seven miles on horseback. Part of this road has been at various times repaired, but these portions have afterwards been totally neglected and fallen into ruin. For the most part the road is unbridged, and in the places where the bridges have been constructed they have been neglected till the approaches have been wholly cut away by the rains leaving the bridges inaccessible. The whole of the Delta of the Godavary is impassable in rains.

From this road there is another branch to Hyderabad and Nagpore, twenty-two miles long. The money expended on it has been thrown away; it is never in a fit state for traffic; and such is the general condition of all the trunk roads, with the exception of that leading to Bangalore, which alone is practicable for post-carriages at the rate of four or five miles an hour.

That the country is in an equally desperate state as regards district roads is certain. The district of Cuddappah, 18,000 miles square, has nothing that deserves the name. There are tracks, impassable after a little rain, and everywhere carts when used carry half their proper load, and proceed by stages of half the usual length. While the trunk road from this district is so notoriously bad, that the military board use it as a trial ground to test the powers of new gun carriages, which are pronounced safe if they pass through this ordeal. Thus is one of the finest cotton-fields of India, kept down by the state of its roads and communications with the coast, its natural outlet for commerce.

There are few districts in which country roads, as distinguished from the chief trunk roads, have received any attention whatever;

and to all but those few the description of Cuddappah is applicable.

The Collectorate of Salem, which is flat, has alone received considerable improvement, at the cost of 4000*l.*, but is still without main roads of communication with surrounding districts. The entire extent of road practicable for bullock carts, scarcely exceeds 3000 miles for this entire Presidency, without bridges, impracticable in wet weather, tedious and dangerous in the dry season.

The roads in Bellary, are in a wretched state. Mysore, which borders for 200 miles on the south boundary, is traversed by excellent roads, feasible not only for country carts, but for spring carriages; but in Bellary, no corresponding roads are made to meet them, and consequently, not only the town, but the whole district of Bellary is cut off from the advantages which are offered by an open and easy communication between the Mysore territories, and the ports on the western coast, and the whole southern Peninsula.

Canara is almost entirely locked up, the country having probably less prospects than others, of internal improvement, from its natural obstacles. Whilst throughout the rest of the territory, and even in those fertile spots of Tanjore and Rajahmundry, where irrigation-works have been carried out, there are neither roads nor bridges passable throughout the year. Yet we are informed that the total expense incurred in the Presidency of Fort St. George, for ten years, ending 1847 inclusive, on the repairs and constructions of works of irrigation, and on roads, bridges, and ghauts, was 825,118*l.*, or at the rate of about 82,000*l.* a year.



## BOMBAY

IN the Presidency of Bombay, where the want of roads has been most severely felt from the total absence of all other modes of intercommunication, and where the requirements of ordinary traffic rendered it more particularly incumbent on the Government to make the most necessary improvements, the dilatoriness and neglect which it has shown exceeds even that which marks Bengal. Here in truth it was not one trunk road that was required, but two or three main arteries of communication were wanting to serve the traffic of the cotton district. Yet it will be found, and is scarcely credible, that the only line leading into the interior, which is for 72 miles, bridged, metalled, and kept in order, is that which starting from Bombay, proceeds through the Bhore Ghaut, no greater distance than to Poona. This, the greatest highway to the East for the internal commerce of the Presidency comprises the enormous gradient of 1 in 9 on the Ghaut, which is almost as prohibitive as a high customs duty. Whilst such is the best road, the second is about 250 miles of the main trunk line from Bombay to Agra, which is incomplete. The Thull Ghaut Pass, which is on this line, is indeed improved to a gradient of 1 in 20, but the road as a whole is in a very bad state. Colonel Grant says of it in his work, entitled "Cotton and Indian Railways," that in 1850 it was so bad from Bhowndy to the foot of the Ghauts, that a new line was being surveyed. The same authority informs us that to Nassic at the other side of the pass, the road is neither metalled nor bridged, whilst as regards the roads from Nassic towards the cotton districts, they are for the most part cleared tracks, on which the draught is excessive. Such is the state of the second cartway passing into the interior from Bombay. These, however, are the great cotton roads of the Presidency leading to Candeish and to Berar, which were they ever passable or equal to the traffic which they serve—traffic by the way which is now at its smallest limit—the roads within those

cotton districts or converging to them—would still continue to render comparatively useless. As for the Agra road, the following letter, dated Bombay, Dec. 3rd, 1851, is sufficient proof of the truth of our statement:—

“We have repeatedly before remarked upon the want of good roads as being the fatal bar to any material increase of trade in other parts of the Bombay Presidency; and nowhere else in the world, probably, would this want of means of transit to, from, and within regions of great natural resources be tolerated, as it is here with apparent indifference. The reason is, that the natives alone really witness the obstacles to an extension of trade,—the business of Europeans is confined to Bombay, and they make the most of the produce they find there, leaving the question of supply entirely to the natives.

“We have but one made road worthy of the name—that through Candeish to Agra,—and even that is in some parts almost impassable for laden carts; yet from this road branches off these bullock tracks by which the bulk of the produce of the fertile valley of Berar finds its way to Bombay, and our own province of Candeish yields a gross revenue of nearly a quarter million sterling, of which so small a pittance is allowed for outlay on roads, that it has been insufficient even to keep in repair those “fair weather” tracks which have from time to time been made. It is true a railroad to pass through the country alluded to is contemplated; but so far only twenty-six miles of it has been actually determined on, viz., from Bombay to Callian, the only part of the whole distance in which trade is comparatively independent of a good road, having water carriage.”

Another letter from Bombay, 25th June, 1852, is equally to the point, and gains importance from being founded on the official report of an important and highly efficient engineer officer:—

“No previous season has shown more palpably how seriously the want of roads impedes the trade of the country. Berar, for instance, has produced this year the finest cotton crop we have seen for very many years, if ever; the quality of much of it is superior to the best Broach, and the cultivation of such cotton can be almost indefinitely increased in that province:—but to

usual level of the plain. Even this was a great improvement; but since first constructed it has been left to nature, and will of course in a few years be as bad as before any money was expended on it."

Extract of letter, September, 1849:—

"I sincerely hope before many years to see the immense resources of this rich country more developed. Up to the present period *nothing* has been done to improve it. A few rupees to mend a broken bund that may have cost lacs, only granted after quires of correspondence, or when it is too late to save a noble work from entire destruction."

Extract of letter, May, 1850:—

"Though in the Deccan and Concan money had been expended on roads, still in Guzerat, which furnishes the largest amount of revenue, we had not a single mile of road or any other facility for inland transit. I could give you a few good examples of the obstacles to our trade by the want of anything in the shape of roads or crossings to the many small streams up which the high spring tide flows. During a late trip I made to the Dhollera Bunder, I wanted to go from one post to another only five cos distant, yet I had to travel ten cos, and was in the saddle from daylight until three p.m. At one place I counted some twenty carts of merchandise all stuck in the mud, owing to the spring tide having overflowed a considerable track of rather low ground; I rode through it with difficulty. At another place I was obliged to halt for some hours to allow the tide to run out. All this took place at localities I have frequently ridden over without a particle of mud or water. Merchandise from Dhollera to the north had to make a circuit of twenty cos, or two days' journey, owing to these obstacles. I reported them to the collector."

In Guzerat, in fact, though the cotton fields may none of them be more than twenty-five or thirty miles from the shipping ports, still these twenty-five or thirty miles of track are as bad as bad can be; and, in addition, for want of adequate piers on the Nerbudda, Myhee, and Taptee rivers, cotton has to be rolled through the mud to reach the Bombay market.

Now it is important to observe, that when a motion was made in the Court of Proprietors, with a view to the improvement of the roads in Guzerat, the proposition was met by a remark from the Deputy Chairman that no province required them less. The Chairman himself said the same thing in Parliament distinctly. There is no foundation whatever for these remarks. In the immediate vicinity of Surat, Broach, and Tankaria Bunda, and in our own territories, there are no made roads and the fact was altogether lost sight of, that whilst from places within 100 miles of Dholera, near 100,000 bales of cotton found their way there, the most serious impediments existed to the transit from that place to Bombay, there being no roads or bridges within our own territory; and the difficulty being aggravated by this, that as sufficient time was often wanting to prepare cotton for exportation between the ripening of the harvest in February and the setting in of the south-west monsoon, there were material obstacles to the timely transport of the crops to the seaboard vessels leaving Dholera after the 15th of May, which therefore stood but little chance of reaching Bombay that season. Indeed, whole fleets might be yearly seen frequently forced to refuge in the numerous rivers between Surat and Bombay, and all this for want of common passable roads.

Bombay, it must be borne in mind, is the only harbour throughout Western India which admits of the ingress and egress of ships at all seasons of the year. Another immense advantage which it possesses is, that it is the nearest seaboard to the magnificent cotton-field of Berar which yields, and is capable of yielding to an almost unlimited extent, the very best indigenous cotton, superior in whiteness, and for retention of the dye, to any which has yet found its way into this country, admirably adapted therefore for the home and European markets. As early as 1837 these advantages had been set forth with becoming vigour by the Committee of Commerce and Agriculture of the Royal Asiatic Society, and urged with all the weight, which was inherent in so important a society. It said—

“There is no question whatever, that the production of cotton would, with good roads to the interior, go on increasing rapidly,

for the stimulus to cultivation would be as great from decreased expenses as it has lately been from increased prices.

“Thus, with proper management we might reasonably expect to see the exports of the country in this staple alone, swelling at the rate of 100,000 bales per annum, and amounting probably, at no distant period, to a million of bales. And what would be the consequence in other respects? Besides benefiting the revenue, and improving the condition of the people of India, such a trade would give employment to a vast amount of British shipping (400,000 tons), at the same time that it created a greater demand for the manufactures of the mother country.

“Upon the trade in salt, the effect of improved means of communication probably would be equally great. The first cost of this article is but trifling, amounting in general to less than an eighth of the sum paid for its transportation to the market of Oomrawutty. Anything therefore, which reduced the latter, would, to an almost equal extent, affect the price of this great necessary of life to the consumer in Central India, who at present, from being forced to supply himself with it by means of a slow and laborious land-carriage of 600 miles, finds it one of the most expensive articles of food. There can be little doubt, therefore, that a reduction of fifty per cent. in its price, which might be effected by good roads, would at least double the quantity consumed, and that instead of the trade in it being limited to 200,000 bullock loads, it would soon exceed twice that amount.

“Nor is it in cotton and salt alone that an improvement of this kind would take place. Every description of raw and bulky produce, such as wool, hemp, and dye-stuffs, suffers in an equal degree by the present state of things; the effect of which, in many cases, may be estimated as doubling and trebling their price, between the place of cultivation and the sea coast, where a large market for them alone exists. Great, therefore, as the field unquestionably is for improvement in India in the mode of cultivating and preparing its products for market, and beneficial as the introduction of new articles of produce, suited to the wants of Europe, as well as to those of the native population would be, the simplest, surest, and most important step towards bettering the

condition of the people, and increasing the resources of the country, will be, facilitating the means of internal traffic."

Such was the appeal made sixteen years ago, not by a Chamber of Commerce, or a like association, at any of the great manufacturing towns in this country,—not by the British inhabitants of Bombay, including in like manner the patriotic and most influential of all classes of the natives, as well as Europeans, of that settlement, but emanating from an enlightened section of the Royal Asiatic Society, consisting of a Mount Stuart Elphinstone, a Johnston, a Holt Mackenzic, an Ellis, a Briggs, a Malcolmson, and a Gore Ouseley. The only reply vouchsafed to their representation was, that it would be brought to the notice of the Government of India, and that the abstract statement on the same occasion applied for, of the roads executed in the preceding twenty years, could not be supplied, arrangements having been subsequently made for the supersession of the gratuitous services of these patriotic gentlemen from which such advantages had been contemplated. The result has been—and can we wonder at it?—that produce has decreased, and that particularly with reference to that of Berar, during the last seven years, a notable falling off is visible up to the present time in the exports of the cotton staple alone.

Reviewing and deeply lamenting the very little, in the way of improving these great commercial thoroughfares, which had been effected over the intervening space of ten years, Mr. Williamson Ramsay, the late experienced and energetic revenue commissioner of the Deccan, re-awakened the authorities of this country by the publication of two letters in 1846, addressed to Lord Wharnccliffe, a warm advocate of every measure directed to the improved access with the El Dorado of Berar. The Notes from Khamgaum, of about the same date, on which he based this fresh appeal to the public, stated as follows:—

"The soil throughout the greatest portion of the province is uncommonly rich and fit for cultivation of cotton. The only obstacles to the almost unlimited production of the staple are, primarily, the difficulty of transport from the place of cultivation to the Bombay market.

“To give an idea of the extent to which the first of these at present operates, it is necessary to state that the price of transport amounts to from 5 to 8 rupees per bullock-load, between Khangaum and Bombay; or allowing three bullock-loads to the candy of 78½ lb. avoirdupoise, to 15 to 24 rupees per candy. Taking the price of cotton at, say 20 rupees per load, or 60 rupees per candy, it will give about an average of 32½ per cent. upon the first cost. But this is not all. The time occupied on the route between Berar and Bombay is very great. A laden bullock travels only at the rate of from six to nine miles a day, and often from lameness, fatigue, and other causes, is obliged to remain stationary for days together. About sixty days therefore are required to effect the transit between the place of cultivation and the coast; and as the cotton of Berar does not appear in the local market much before February, and is not cleaned and prepared before April, it requires the utmost exertion to bring any portion of it to Bombay previous to the setting in of the south-west monsoon; while it invariably happens that large quantities are caught on the road by the rain, and if not destroyed, are greatly damaged by becoming wet, mouldy, and black. Besides, in such cases numbers of the cattle used for transport are killed from overwork, as in addition to the anxiety felt to push them on to the utmost to avoid the effects of the rain, the cotton with which they are laden, from absorbing quantities of moisture, becomes double its original weight, and actually crushes the animal to the ground. It frequently happens, therefore, owing to this and other causes I have mentioned, that hundreds of their carcasses are to be met with just previous to the monsoon, strewed along the paths they have traversed.”

Reviewing the seven years intervening since the representation just quoted, although we are permitted to record the complete facilities which have recently been added to the ascent of the Thull Ghaut, and the construction of a Moorum road from its summit in the direction of Agra, it must be obvious that as far only as to Chandore is such improved main artery subservient to the traffic with Berar; the cart road from that place in the direction of Khangaum not having been commenced, while below

the Thull Ghaut, and through the Concan, it is bad, to a degree of which an opinion may be formed from the last official report, dated in 1852, of Captain Wingate of the engineers, now employed in revising the assessment of Candeish, in which he states:—

“The Candeish carts are fast appropriating the traffic of the Brinjarries,\* and will doubtless succeed in doing so to a much greater extent, whenever the frightful and thoroughly execrable road from the Thull Ghaut through the Concan is superseded by such a road as has been made over the Ghaut itself, a measure which is urgently required for the accommodation of a vast and increasing traffic, on the most important line of road in our Presidency, with the single exception of that by the Bhoze Ghaut.” He goes on to say, “These facts account for the cultivators of Candeish being able to pay higher rates than elsewhere. But while fully admitting this, I am satisfied that the present rates are much too high; and for reasons already given, I am of opinion that a very liberal reduction is required.”

Similar testimony is borne by another public functionary, Mr. Green, who observes:†—

“Liberal and admirable as the new assessment is, and essential as it undoubtedly was, as the first step towards any improvement in Candeish, it is clear that something much greater still must be accomplished. It is altogether impossible that a people raising merely bulky and coarse agricultural produce, should ever be able to pay a money revenue of any amount; and their abundant crops cannot have a ready and remunerative sale, unless the means of internal communication are sufficiently improved.”

From the foregoing it demonstratively appears that about two-thirds of the mainway through our own territory, from Kassaley-bunder towards Khangaum, a total distance of only 250 miles, is in the same wretched and inefficient state as at the commencement of the present charter; and here it calls for observation that so far from the assertion made in Parliament in the debate, June, 1850, being untrue, “that all the stories about the carriage of cotton on bullocks’ backs were unfounded,” it appears by the official

\* Native hereditary carriers.

† Concise Remarks, &c., Bombay, 1832, p. 44.



and published account of 1852, that 62,115 bullocks were employed last year in the conveyance of cotton down the Thull Ghaut; 22,930 more laden with grain, and 35,119 with salt, not to mention miscellaneous traffic to a much larger amount of tonnage, having for a great part been so conveyed.

Of the western provinces generally, it may be said, that the greatest want of the means of transit prevails throughout the whole of them. The country, from Bombay to Oomrawutty and Nagpore, and from Poonah towards the Godavery, came into our possession in 1818, and efforts were made by Mr. Elphinstone, who was then commissioner, to improve the transit, but great difficulties were found from the price of making the roads; the expense and difficulty there was in getting permission from the Court of Directors in England to expend the sums which were recommended for making these roads. Roads were, however, made, but hardly any bridges, and the consequence was that the roads were isolated between rivers, and as there was no means of passing those rivers conveniently on carts, the traffic was merely between one river and another on carts; the trade of the country is therefore not much changed since that; still, a great number of pack bullocks are employed in conveying the merchandise of the country. These roads, Lieut.-Gen. Briggs says, are after all only improved cart-tracks, or Collector's road.\*

The accounts of the roads in the South Mahratta country, in a letter published in December, 1850, are curious:—"From Belgaum to Dharwar is a made road, not a real one," on which says the Collector, "There are many serious obstacles. To the ports on the coast north of Coomplah, from the larger and increasing cotton districts north of Dharwar in the Nizam's country, and the Sholapore and Belgaum collectorates, the roads which did exist are entirely neglected. Fifteen miles from Koombaree Ghaut to Chiploon, which were anciently paved, are none the better for it now, and though a new road was surveyed and reported on in 1828, it has never been made. To Veejyegurh, the roads are mere tracks, though the harbour is deep. The Bengal and home authorities were shamed into making a line of narrow rough

\* Briggs, Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 138.

road,' that is, a mere cleared track unsafe for carts and not to be attempted by carriages, from the interior to Vizimdroog, an excellent harbour. The only improvements, in fact, are those lately undertaken, by which the Phoonda, and two other Ghauts between that and Bombay will be passable."

There is a road 70 miles long, from Belgaum to Vingorla, on the coast, which is entirely unbridged, besides being made to run through the steepest portion of a Ghaut, called the Rham Ghaut.

An intelligent officer observed of this road: "I am afraid I should fail in attempting an estimate of the loss arising from such bad and impracticable roads as this in the transportation of military stores. It was supposed to undergo annual repairs, but one season it was not touched, and consequently became impassable; so much so that the cartmen had to make the road passable with small pickers, which they invariably carry, and combining together, they get over the ground with difficulty. As each cart crosses, the bullocks are taken to drag a loaded cart out of the river, and in this manner they ascend the Ghaut, by adding bullocks as required, and returning to bring up carts in the rear: the loss of time thus occasioned is lamentable. From the want of bridges, even foot-passengers are cut off for days."

The Dharwar road is the last we need mention, within this Presidency, that has any pretensions to the name. It was recently constructed from Dharwar to Sirsee, and thence to Coomptah, on the coast; but, as usual, it wants bridges. Yet here, as everywhere else in India, experience shows that neglect of public works has produced decline of revenue, and that material improvement has increased it.

"Guzerat, before it came into our possession," says the writer of "*Letters on the Cotton and Roads of Western India*," "had more opulent inhabitants than the contiguous populations of Candeish and the Deccan, and were remarkable for their amiable and hospitable manners. The liberality of the native rulers in devoting part of the land revenue to public works, according to its original design, powerfully contributed to their prosperity. But a change of masters imported a change of circumstances—the

deterioration of the condition of the people followed in the train of British sovereignty, and with this, I am sorry to say, an entire cessation of expenditure in public works.”\*

But deterioration of the people is not alone the result of want of roads. The system produces, as a consequence still more to be deplored, the prevalence of local famines, one of which was felt with great severity during the monsoon of 1823, in the country between Poona and Candeish. It appears from undeniable evidence that whilst grain was so plentiful in Candeish as to sell at 8 shillings a quarter, it had risen at Aurungabad to 34 shillings, and at Poona to 64, and then to 76 shillings a quarter. The monsoon had stopped the tracks between Candeish and Poona, and all the agonies of famine were felt by the inhabitants of one well-peopled district, whilst in another, not distant 300 miles, the finest grain was purchaseable for next to nothing.

Such fatal consequences, such reckless loss of human lives, was the more unpardonable, as in the whole of India the smallest instalment of public work in roads is sure to pay over and over again the cost of its formation.

A few years before 1848, Mr. J. A. Turner ventured to suggest to the Court of Directors, the making of the road from Bombay to Coomptah on the coast, or rather the improvement of a distance of six miles on a road already traced.† After a considerable delay, the road was sanctioned, but remained impassable for carts; but the effect of the road as far as Sirsee was quite remarkable. When it was finished, in 1840-41, 101 carts travelled upon it the first year, and in the two years afterwards 443 carts. Incomplete as the road was, the traffic of the port of Coomptah, during three years, had increased from 160,000*l.* to 400,000*l.*, and the Customs had increased from 4662*l.* per annum to 18,015*l.* on imports and exports; but though the custom duties of that place increased from 4662*l.* to 18,015*l.* within three years, still 40 miles of road, available only for pack bullocks, which could be constructed for moderate expense out of the profits of the revenue, remain unmade.

The Bhore Ghaut and Jubbulpore roads are also instances of great, too great, profit on public works. Constructed in 1828, the

\* Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 270.

† Briggs, Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 82.

tolls on it have risen exceedingly high since that time, as much as from 500*l.* to 3000*l.* in the course of six or eight years.

The Jubbulpore road between Jubbulpore and Bénarès, served in the first year after it was constructed, for less than 400 carts; a person was then placed to ascertain the number, and in three years after that, in 1838, the traffic had amounted to 6000 carts.\*

There may, however, be difficulties in making roads in India. Lord Ellenborough bore testimony to their cheapness in his speech of May 8, 1833, and a gentleman of experience on this point, in a pamphlet on the cultivation of cotton in India, tells us:—

“Roads are to be made in India for a less sum than in any other country; 800*l.* per mile would pay for any road; and the small amount held up, as an additional reason why Government are to blame for not having constructed them.

“I speak advisedly, however, when I affirm that the above estimate is much too high, and that India might be covered with roads for 450*l.* per mile, and I would willingly contract to execute any number of miles at that rate. The great trunk road has been constructed for less than this per mile.”†

Lieutenant-General Briggs on the same point says:—

“I superintended the construction of a road made entirely by natives, for the Rajah of Sattarah; it was 36 miles long, 18 feet wide, with drains and small bridges for the whole distance, and the expense did not exceed 150*l.* a mile. There is plenty of material at hand all over India, no deeper than five feet below the surface.” As for the difficulty of preserving them when made.—“There is no difficulty in retaining the roads in India, any more than in other countries; it has been asserted, I know, that in consequence of the heavy rains the roads would be washed away; but if they are properly made, and culverts built to carry off the water, that would not happen. There is a road on the Bhoze Ghaut which was once almost a complete swamp, and was impassable during the rain altogether, till the raised road was made, and it has lasted for upwards of thirty years.

\* Briggs, Cotton Rep., 1848.

† On the Cultivation of Cotton in India, pp. 32-5. By R. Money, 25th Nat. Reg. Inf. London, 1852.

It is as good as any in England; and that is one of the parts of the country where they used to say it was impossible to make a road."

It is evident from what precedes, that Bombay is nearly as badly off for roads as Bengal; and that up to the present time, the countries within the reach of its ports, noted for the growth of cotton, are so crippled by the bad state of intercommunications, that that production which might have been immense is absolutely null. So miserably inadequate indeed are the existing means of communication with the interior, that the benefit derived from them may be said not to be felt, and to be immeasurably small when compared with those which might be derived from their extension.

"Yet the Bombay government has made about 550 miles only of road, in thirty years,"\* says Mr. Williamson. The expenditure on works of irrigation, and on the construction of roads and bridges for ten years, ending 1845-6, was only 399,276/.,† this Presidency being one, on which as we have shown, the cost of superintendence was enormously high.

That roads, canals, and irrigation in our Indian possessions may still be classed among the category of wants, now remains beyond a doubt; that from the absence of the first and second of these wants, the people have been kept in a state far lower than it concerns the safety of the country that they should remain, is evident; for they have been cut off from markets, where not only the produce of the interior would find a profitable outlet, but the British goods, which at present are imported in proportion of two-thirds less to India than to other countries more favourably conditioned, would gain in value and increase in number; and furnish to the natives at prices not above their means, comforts, which at present are denied to them; they have been reduced to the tremendous sufferings of local famines, by the impossibility of equalising prices on the commonest articles of food, from want of intercommunication. They are kept ill-clad, ill-fed, and abject in every degree, by the same cause, which closes to British enterprise a

\* Mr. Williamson's evid., Cotton Rep., 1848, p. 170.

† India Public Works Rep., 1851, p. 208.

population three times as great as that of all other countries put together which we supply with manufactures, out of Europe and the United States; and the effects of such a state of things must be to foster discontent and inspire hatred of our rule.

From the absence of irrigation, vast tracts which might be fertilised, remain barren, and are profitless, notwithstanding the known results of such improvements in producing increase of revenue; results which might become still greater were the benefits attending roads through irrigated districts more fully felt and thoroughly attended to.

These wants, however, will never be supplied so long as the present system remains in force. Neglect, recklessness, delay, misappropriation of funds to swell revenue, instead of furthering improvement, are proved against the Company. A vast reform will be required. Where great thorough lines of intercommunications are required, railroads must be made, and that speedily—not at the present creeping pace; roads to meet the most important internal lines must be bridged, metalled, and completed; canals be fitted for navigation as well as irrigation; and whilst the profit obtained from completed works is devoted to necessary repairs and fresh improvements, the niggardly expenditure of the present day must be changed for one commensurate with the importance of our Indian territories. Let us, in fine, initiate some new system of policy which shall have for one of its objects the material improvement of India, upon which not only depends the future welfare of the people of that country, but the prosperity of that greatest of English interests—British manufactures.

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## INDIA REFORM SOCIETY.

On Saturday, the 12th of March, a Meeting of the Friends of India was held in Charles Street, St. James's Square, with a view of bringing public opinion to bear on the Imperial Parliament in the case of India, so as to obtain due attention to the complaints and claims of the inhabitants of that vast empire. H. D. Seymour, Esq., M.P., having been called to the chair, the following Resolutions were agreed to by the Meeting:—

1. That the character of the alterations to be effected in the constitution of our Indian Government at the termination of the East India Company's Charter Act, on the 30th of April, 1854, is a question which demands the most ample and most serious consideration.

2. That although Committees of both Houses of Parliament have been appointed, in conformity with the practice on each preceding renewal of the Charter Act, for the purpose of investigating the nature and the results of our Indian Administration, those Committees have been appointed on the present occasion at a period so much later than usual, that the interval of time remaining before the expiration of the existing powers of the East India Company, is too short to permit the possibility of collecting such evidence as would show what alterations are required in our Indian Government.

3. That the inquiry now being prosecuted by Committees of the Legislature will be altogether unsatisfactory, if it be confined to the evidence of officials and of servants of the East India Company, and conducted and terminated without reference to the petitions and wishes of the more intelligent of the natives of India.

4. That it is the duty of the friends of India to insist upon a temporary Act to continue the present government of India for a period not exceeding three years, so that time may be given for such full inquiry and deliberation as will enable Parliament within that period to legislate permanently for the future administration of our Indian Empire.

5. That, in order to obtain such a measure, this Meeting constitutes itself an "India Reform Society," and names the undermentioned gentlemen as a Committee.

T. BARNES, Esq., M.P.  
J. BELL, Esq., M.P.  
W. BIGGS, Esq., M.P.  
J. F. B. BLACKETT, Esq., M.P.  
G. BOWYER, Esq., M.P.  
J. BRIGHT, Esq., M.P.  
F. C. BROWN, Esq.  
H. A. BRUCE, Esq., M.P.  
LIEUT.-COL. J. M. CAULFIELD, M.P.  
J. CHEETHAM, Esq., M.P.  
W. H. CLARKE, Esq.  
S. CHAWFORD, Esq.  
J. CROOK, Esq., M.P.  
J. DICKINSON, JUN., Esq.  
M. G. FIELDEN, Esq., M.P.  
LIEUT.-GEN. SIR J. F. FITZGERALD,  
K.C.B., M.P.  
M. FORSTER, Esq., M.P.  
F. FRENCH, Esq., M.P.  
R. GARDNER, Esq., M.P.  
RIGHT HON. T. M. GIBSON, M.P.  
VISCOUNT GODERICH, M.P.  
G. HADFIELD, Esq., M.P.  
W. HARCOURT, Esq.  
I. HEYWORTH, Esq., M.P.  
C. HINDLEY, Esq., M.P.

T. HUNT, Esq.  
E. J. HUTCHINS, Esq., M.P.  
P. F. C. JOHNSTONE, Esq.  
T. KENNEDY, Esq., M.P.  
M. LEWIN, Esq.  
F. LUCAS, Esq., M.P.  
J. MAGAN, Esq., M.P.  
T. McCULLAGH, Esq.  
E. MIALI, Esq., M.P.  
G. H. MOORE, Esq., M.P.  
B. OLIVEIRA, Esq., M.P.  
A. J. OTWAY, Esq., M.P.  
G. M. W. PEACOCKE, Esq., M.P.  
APSEY PELLATT, Esq., M.P.  
J. PILKINGTON, Esq., M.P.  
J. G. PHILLIMORE, Esq., M.P.  
T. PHINN, Esq., M.P.  
H. REEVE, Esq.  
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H. D. SEYMOUR, Esq., M.P.  
W. D. SEYMOUR, Esq., M.P.  
J. B. SMITH, Esq., M.P.  
J. SULLIVAN, Esq.  
O. THOMPSON, Esq., M.P.  
F. WARREN, Esq.  
J. A. WISE, Esq., M.P.

Correspondence on all matters connected with the Society to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, by whom subscriptions will be received in aid of its object.

JOHN DICKINSON, JUN., *Hon. Sec.*

Committee Rooms, Clarence Chambers, 12, Haymarket,  
*April 12th, 1855.*





# INDIA REFORM.

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No. IX.

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THE  
STATE AND GOVERNMENT  
OF  
INDIA UNDER ITS NATIVE RULERS

BY J. SULLIVAN, ESQ.

LONDON:  
SAUNDERS & STANFORD, 6, CHARING CROSS.

MANCHESTER:  
SIMMS AND DINHAM.

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*Price Threepence.*

# INDIA REFORM.

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1.—GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SINCE 1834.

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2.—THE FINANCES OF INDIA.

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3.—NOTES ON INDIA,

By Dr. BUIST, OF BOMBAY.

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4.—THE NATIVE STATES OF INDIA.

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5.—AN EXTRACT FROM MILL'S HISTORY,  
ON THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT

AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE  
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE, BY J. SULLIVAN, ESQ.

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6.—INDIA UNDER A BUREAUCRACY.

By J. DICKINSON, JUN., M.R.A.S. F.R.S.G.

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7.—INDIAN WRONGS WITHOUT  
A REMEDY :

ILLUSTRATED BY THE CARNATIC, SATTARAH, PARSEE  
AND COORG CASES.

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8.—PUBLIC WORKS.

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*Preparing for publication.*

10.—NATURE OF THE INDIA QUESTION  
AND OF THE EVIDENCE UPON IT.

## INDIA REFORM.

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### THE STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF INDIA UNDER ITS NATIVE RULERS.

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WE threaten to appropriate the territories of the Native Princes, our allies, upon the strength mainly of our own virtues, and of their vices. All Native Governments, we say, are bad; all Native Governors are tyrants and sensualists. Their subjects are groaning under oppression, and we are bound to relieve them; all who wear turbans are worthless—all who wear hats are worthy. There was no good Government in India until the advent of the Anglo-Saxon; it is the Anglo-Saxon who has taught the Indian the arts of civil life, and who shows him what Government ought to be. The ruins of the tombs and temples of ancient Greece and Rome are worthy of all admiration; they are proofs of the genius and taste of the people who created them: the more magnificent ruins of Ancient India are monuments only of ostentation and selfishness. "I contemplated those ruins," said Lord Ellenborough, "with admiration of our predecessors, and with humiliation at our own short-comings." "You might as well be humiliated by the sight of the Pyramids," was the retort of Lord Aberdeen.

What is deserving of all praise in the West, is not praiseworthy in the East. When we see great works of utility and ornament in the West, we pronounce them to be evidence of prosperous and tranquil Governments; but similar works in the East seem to lead us to a different judgment. At this moment we are dependent for millions of our revenue upon magnificent works of irrigation, constructed by our predecessors, the country is strewn with the remains of similar

works. We pass them without notice, and dwell upon our own comparatively puny efforts at imitation.

We found the people of India, it is said, abject, degraded, false, to the very core. Mussulman dominion had called into full activity all the bad qualities which Hindooism has in itself a fatal tendency to generate. The most indolent and selfish of our own Governors have been models of benevolence and beneficence when compared with the greatest of the Native Sovereigns. The luxurious selfishness of the Moghul Emperors depressed and enfeebled the people. Their predecessors were either unscrupulous tyrants, or indolent debauchees. Nor were their successors, the Ghilji Sovereigns, any better.

Having the command of the public press in this country, and the sympathy of the public mind with us, it is an easy task thus to exalt ourselves at the expense of our predecessors. We tell our own story, and our testimony is unimpeachable; but if we find any thing favourable related of those who have preceded us, the accounts we pronounce to be suspicious. We contrast the Moghul conquests of the fourteenth century with the "victorious, mild and merciful progress of the British arms in the East in the nineteenth." But, if our object was a fair one, we should contrast the Mussulman invasion of Hindostan, with the contemporaneous Norman invasion of England—the characters of the Mussulman Sovereigns with their contemporaries in the West—their Indian wars of the fourteenth century with our French wars, or with the Crusades—the effect of the Mahomedan conquest upon the characters of the Hindoo, with the effect of the Norman conquest upon the Anglo-Saxon, when "to be called an Englishman was considered as a reproach—when those who were appointed to administer justice were the fountains of all iniquity—when magistrates, whose duty it was to pronounce righteous judgments were the most cruel of all tyrants, and greater plunderers than common thieves and robbers;"—when the great men were inflamed with such a rage of money, that they cared not by

great that a Princess of Scotland found "it necessary to wear  
 "a religious habit in order to preserve her person from  
 "violation."\*

The history of the Mahomedan dynasties in India is full, it is said, of lamentable instances of the cruelty and rapacity of the early conquerors, not without precedent, however, in contemporary Christian history; for when Jerusalem was taken by the first Crusaders, at the end of the 11th century, the garrison, consisting of 40,000 men, "was put to the sword without distinction; arms protected not the brave, nor submission the timid; no age or sex received mercy; infants perished by the same sword that pierced their mothers. The streets of Jerusalem were covered with heaps of slain, and the shrieks of agony and despair resounded from every house." When Louis VII. of France, in the 12th century, "made himself master of the town of Vitri, he ordered it to be set on fire; in consequence of this inhuman order, 1300 persons who had taken refuge, perished in the flames." In England, at the same time, under our Stephen, war "was carried on with so much fury, that the land was left uncultivated, and the instruments of husbandry were destroyed or abandoned;" and the result of our French wars in the 14th century, was a state of things "more horrible and destructive than was ever experienced in any age or country." The insatiable cruelty of the Mohamedan conquerors, it is said, stands recorded upon more undeniable authority, than the insatiable benevolence of the Mohamedan conquerors. We have abundant testimony of the cruelty of contemporary Christian conquerors, have we any evidence of their benevolence?

As attempts are thus systematically made, in bulky volumes, to run down the character of Native Governments and Native Sovereigns, in order that we may have a fair pretext for seizing upon their possessions, it becomes necessary to shew that we have a Christian Roland for every Native Oliver: that if the Mussulman conquerors of India were cruel and rapacious, they were matched by their Christian contempo-

\* Henry of Huntingdon, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and Eadmon.

raries. It is much our fashion to compare India in the 15th and 16th centuries with England in the 19th, and to pique ourselves upon the result. "When we compare other countries with England," said a sagacious observer,\* "we usually speak of England as she now is; we scarcely ever think of going back beyond the Reformation, and we are apt to regard every foreign country as ignorant and uncivilized, whose state of improvement does not in some degree approximate to our own, even though it should be higher than our own was at no distant period." It would be almost as fair to compare India in the 16th with England in the 19th century, as it would be to compare the two countries in the first centuries of the Christian era, when India was at the top of civilization, and England at the bottom. India had gradually declined in civilization, from the date of the invasion of Alexander, up to the time of the first Mussulman conquest; but we have abundant testimony to prove, that at that date, and for centuries before it, her people enjoyed a high degree of prosperity, which continued to the breaking up of the Moghul Empire early in the 18th century.

## THE STATE OF INDIA AT THE TIME OF GREEK INVASION.

"ALL the descriptions of the parts of India visited by the Greeks," Mr. Elphinstone tells us, "give the idea of a country teeming with population, and enjoying the highest degree of prosperity." There were 1500 cities between the Hydaspes and the Hyphasis. Palilothra was eight miles long, and one and a half broad, defended by a deep ditch and high rampart, with 570 towers and 164 gates. The numerous commercial cities and posts for foreign trade, which are mentioned in the Periplus attest the progress of the Indians in a department which more than any other shews the advanced condition of a nation. Arrian mentions with admiration that

all the Indians were free. The army was in constant pay during war and peace; the arms and horses were supplied by the State; they never ravaged the country. The Greeks speak of the bravery of the Indian armies opposed to them, as superior to that of other nations with whom they had to contend in Asia. They spoke of the police as excellent. In the camp of Sandracotus, consisting of 400,000 men, the sums stolen did not amount to more than about £3 daily. Justice was administered by the King and his assessors. The revenue was derived from the land, which was said to belong to the King: it amounted to one-fourth of the produce. The fields were all measured, and the water carefully distributed for irrigation; taxes were imposed upon trade, and an income-tax levied from merchants and traders. Royal roads are spoken of by Strabo, and mile stones; the war-chariots were drawn by horses in time of war, and by oxen on a march. The arts, though simple, were far from being in a rude state. Gold, gems, silks, and ornaments were in all families; the professions mentioned shew all that is necessary to civilized life. The number of grains, spices, &c. which were grown, afford proofs that the country was in a high state of cultivation. "Their institutions were less rude, their conduct to their enemies more humane, their general learning much more considerable, and in the knowledge of the being and nature of God, they were already in possession of a light which was but faintly perceived, even by the loftiest intellects in the best days of Athens."\*

In the time of Avoca, a Hindoo Sovereign, who reigned some centuries before the Christian era, his edict columns bear testimony to the extent of his dominions, and the civilized character of his Government; since they contain orders "for establishing hospitals and dispensaries throughout his empire; as well as for planting trees and digging wells along the public highways;" and fifty-six years A.C. another Hindoo Sovereign, Vicbrermadiytia, is represented to have been a powerful monarch, who ruled a civilized and populous country.

\* Elphinstone's History of India, vol. i.



Writers, both Hindoo and Mussulman, unite in bearing testimony to the state of prosperity in which India was found at the time of the first Mahomedan conquest. They dwell with admiration on the extent and magnificence of the capital of the kingdom of Canouij, and of the inexhaustible riches of the Temple of Somnath.

Many of the Sovereigns of each of the Mussulman dynasties were men of extraordinary character. The prudence, activity, and enterprize of Mahommed of Giuzni, and his encouragement of literature and the arts, were conspicuous; "he showed so much munificence to individuals of eminence, that his capital exhibited a greater assemblage of literary genius than any other monarch in Asia has ever been able to produce. If rapacious in acquiring wealth, he was unrivalled in the judgment and grandeur with which he knew how to expend it."

His four immediate successors were patrons of literature and the arts, and acceptable to their subjects as good governors. Can we say as much for their contemporaries, William the Norman and his descendants, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries? It is generally supposed that the conquest of India by the Mahomedans was an easy task, but history tells us that none of the Hindoo principalities fell without a severe struggle; that some of them were never subdued, but remain substantive States at this moment, and that Shahab-u-Deen, the first founder of the Mahomedan empire in India, towards the end of the twelfth century, was signally defeated by the Rajpoot Sovereign of Delhi.\*

One of his successors, Koortub-u-deen, who erected the Koortub Minar, "the highest column in the world," and near it a mosque, which for grandeur of design and elegance of execution, was equal to any thing in India, was generally beloved for the frankness and generosity of his disposition, and left a permanent reputation as a just and virtuous ruler.

Sultana Rezia "was endowed," says the historian Ferishta, "with every princely virtue, and those who scrutinize her

"actions the most severely, will find in her no fault," but "that she was a woman." She evinced all the qualities of a just and able sovereign. History does not make quite such favourable mention of our King John, or of Philip of France, her contemporaries. Jueal-u-deen, of the same dynasty, was celebrated for his clemency, his magnanimity and love of literature.

The Hindoo kingdoms of Carnata and Tellingana were re-established about the middle of the 14th century. The first, with its capital, Bijanuggur, "attained to a pitch of power" and splendour not perhaps surpassed by any previous Hindoo "dynasty;" and such was the mutual estimation between the Hindoo and Mussulman Sovereigns of the Deckan, that inter-marriages took place between them, Hindoos were in high command in the Mussulman army, and Mussulmen in the Hindoo, and one Rajah of Bijanuggur built a mosque for his Mahomedan subjects.\* In the reign of Mahomed Toghlak, A.D. 1351, there was an admirably regulated horse and foot post from the frontier to the capital. That capital, Delhi, is described as a most magnificent city, its mosques and walls without an equal on the earth.

The public works of his successor, Feroz Shah, consisted of 50 dams across rivers to promote irrigation, 40 mosques and 30 colleges, 100 caravanseries, 30 reservoirs, 100 hospitals, 100 public baths, 150 bridges, besides many other edifices for pleasure and ornament, and, above all, the canal from the point in the Jumna where it leaves the mountains of Carnal, to Hansi and Hissar, a work which has been partially restored by the British Government. The historian of this monarch expatiates on the happy state of the ryots under his government; on the goodness of their houses and furniture, and the general use of gold and silver ornaments amongst their women. He says, among other things, that every ryot had a good bedstead, and a neat garden. He is said to be a writer not much to be trusted; but the general state of the country must no doubt have been flourishing, for Milo de Conti, an Italian traveller, who visited India about A.D. 1420, speaks highly of what he

saw in Guzerat, and found the banks of the Ganges covered with towns, amidst beautiful gardens and orchards. He passed four famous cities before he reached Maarazia, which he describes as a powerful city, filled with gold, silver, and precious stones. His accounts are corroborated by those of Barbora and Bartema, who travelled in the early part of the 16th century. The former in particular describes Cambay as a remarkably well built city, situated in a beautiful and fertile country, filled with merchants of all nations, and with artizans and manufacturers like those of Flanders. Cæsar Frederic gives a similar account of Guzerat, and Ibn Batuta, who travelled during the anarchy and oppression of Mohammed Tagluk's reign, in the middle of the 15th century, when insurrections were reigning in most parts of the country, enumerates many large and populous towns and cities, and gives a high impression of the state in which the country must have been before it fell into disorder.

Abdurizag, an ambassador from the grandson of Tamerlane, visited the South of India in 1442, and concurs with other observers in giving the impression of a prosperous country. The kingdom of Candeish was at this time in a high state of prosperity under its own kings; the numerous stone embankments by which the streams were rendered applicable to irrigation are equal to any thing in India as works of industry and ability.

Baber, the first sovereign of the Moghul dynasty, although he regards Hindostan with the same dislike that Europeans still feel, speaks of it as a rich and noble country, and expresses his astonishment at the swarming population and the innumerable workmen of every kind and profession. Besides the ordinary business of his kingdom, he was constantly occupied with making aqueducts, reservoirs, and other improvements, as well as in introducing new fruits, and other productions of remote conquerors. His son, Humayon, whose character was free from vices and violent passions, was defeated, and obliged to fly from Hindostan, by Shir Shah, who is described as a prince of consummate prudence and

who, notwithstanding his constant activity in the field, during a short reign had brought his territories into the highest order, and introduced many improvements into his civil government. "He made a high road extending for four months' journey from Bengal to the Western Rhotas near the Indus, with caravanserais at every stage, and wells at every mile and a half. There was an Imam and Muezzim at every mosque, and provisions for the poor at every caravanserai, with attendants of proper castes for Hindoos, as well as for Mussulmen. The road was planted with rows of trees for shade, and in many places was in the state described when the author saw it, after it had stood for eighty-two years."\*

It is almost superfluous to dwell upon the character of the celebrated Akbar, who was equally great in the cabinet and in the field, and renowned for his learning, toleration, liberality, clemency, courage, temperance, industry, and largeness of mind. But it is to his internal policy that Akbar owes his place in that highest order of princes whose reigns have been a blessing to mankind.† He forbade trials by ordeal, and marriages before the age of puberty; and the slaughter of animals for sacrifice. He also permitted widows to marry a second time, contrary to Hindoo law. Above all, he positively prohibited the burning of Hindoo widows against their will. He employed his Hindoo subjects equally with Mahomedans, abolished the capitation tax on infidels, as well as all taxes on pilgrims, and positively prohibited the making slaves of persons taken in war. He perfected the financial reforms which had been commenced in those provinces by Shir Shah. He remeasured all the lands capable of cultivation within the empire; ascertained the produce of each begah;‡ determined the proportion to be paid to the public; and commuted it for a fixed money rent, giving the cultivator the option of paying in kind, if he thought the money rate too high. He abolished at the same time a vast

\* Elphinstone's History, vol. ii. p. 151. † Ib. p. 280.

‡ More than half an acre.

number of vexatious taxes and fees to officers. The result of these wise measures was to reduce the amount of the public demand considerably. His instructions to his revenue officers have come down to us, and show his anxiety for the liberal administration of his system, and for the ease and comfort of his subjects. The tone of his instructions to his judicial officers was "just and benevolent;" he enjoined them to be sparing in capital punishments, and unless in cases of dangerous sedition, to inflict none until he had received the Emperor's confirmation. He forbade mutilation, or other cruelty, as the accompaniment of capital punishment. He reformed and new modelled his army, paying his troops in cash from the treasury, instead of by assignments on the revenue. Besides fortifications, and other public works, he erected many magnificent buildings, which are described and eulogized by Bishop Heber. System and method were introduced into every part of the public service, and the whole of his establishments present "an astonishing picture of magnificence and good order, where unwieldy numbers are managed without disturbance, and economy is attended to in the midst of profusion."

Akbar appears with as much simplicity as dignity. European witnesses describe him as "affable and majestic, merciful and severe; temperate in diet, sparing in sleep, skilful in making guns, casting ordnance, and mechanical arts, curiously industrious, affable to the vulgar, loved and feared of his own, terrible to his enemies." Can we say as much for his great contemporaries,—Elizabeth of England, or Henry the Fourth of France?

The Italian traveller, Pietro del Valle, who wrote in the last year of the reign of Jehanger, Akbar's son, A.D. 1623, bears this testimony to the character of that prince, and to the condition of the people under his rule:—"Generally all live much after a genteel way, and they do it securely; as well, because the king does not prosecute his subjects with false accusations nor deprive them of anything when he sees them live splendidly and with the appearance of riches (as is

"often done in other Mahomedan countries), as because the  
"Indians are inclined to those vanities."

But the reign of Shah Jehan, the grandson of Akbar, was the most prosperous ever known in India. His own dominions enjoyed almost uninterrupted tranquillity and good government; and although Sir Thomas Roe was struck with astonishment at the profusion of wealth which was displayed when he visited the Emperor in his camp in 1615, in which at least two acres were covered with silk, gold carpets and hangings, as rich as velvet embossed with gold and precious stones could make them, yet we have the testimony of Tavernier that he who caused the celebrated peacock throne to be constructed, who, at the festival of his accession, scattered amongst the bystanders money and precious things equal to his own weight, "reigned not so much as a king" over his subjects, but rather as a father over his family." His vigilance over his internal government was unremitting, and for the order and arrangement of his territory, and the good administration of every department of the State, no prince that ever reigned in India could be compared to Shah Jehan.

All his vast undertakings were managed with so much economy, that after defraying the expenses of his great expeditions to Candahar, his wars in Balk, and other heavy charges, and maintaining a regular army of 200,000 horse, Shah Jehan left a treasure, which some reckoned at near six, others at twenty-four millions in coin, besides his vast accumulations in wrought gold and silver, and in jewels.

His treatment of his people was beneficent and paternal, and his liberal sentiments towards those around him, cannot be better shewn than by the confidence which he so generously reposed in his sons.\*

So stable was the foundation upon which this prosperity rested that the empire continued to be in a flourishing condition for a large portion of the long, intolerant, and oppressive

\* Elphinstone, vol. ii. p. 399.

reign of Aurungzebe, and notwithstanding the misgovernment which followed in the next thirty years, under a series of weak and wicked princes, and the commotions which attended the breaking up of the empire, the enormous wealth which Nadir Shah was enabled to carry away with him when he quitted Delhi in 1739, is proof that the country was still in a comparatively prosperous condition.

Among many distinguished Princes of the Deccan in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Mulik Amber, the Regent of Beejapore, holds a distinguished place, both as a warrior and a statesman. He is described to have been a man of uncommon genius. He made his regency respected at home and abroad. He abolished revenue farming—substituted a fixed money assessment for a payment in kind—revived the village establishments, where they had fallen into decay. By such means the country soon became thriving and prosperous, and although his expenditure was liberal his finances were abundant. For upwards of twenty years he was the bulwark of his country against foreign conquest. Though almost constantly engaged in war, this great man found leisure to cultivate the arts of peace. He founded the city of Kirkee, built several splendid palaces, and introduced a system of internal administration, which has left his name in every village far more venerated as a ruler, than renowned as a general.\*

Of the character of the Hindoo Sovereigns who were the contemporaries of the Mussulman Emperors in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we know nothing; but we know that their territories had attained to a pitch of power and splendour which had not been surpassed by their ancestors. We know also that the principal administrators of the Mussulman dynasties, with rare exceptions, were Hindoos—that they were entrusted with the command of armies, and with the regulation of the finances.

The "robber," Sevajee, who entered upon the scene in the

\* Grant Duff, vol. i. pp. 94-6.

latter part of the sixteenth century, and who shook the Moghul Empire to its foundation during the reign of Aurungzebe, was an able as well as a skilful general. His civil government was regular, and he was vigorous in exacting, from his provincial and his village officers, obedience to the rules which he laid down for the protection of the people. His enemies bear witness to his anxiety to mitigate the evils of war by humane regulations, which were strictly enforced. Altogether, this robber hero has left a character which has never since been equalled or ever approached by any of his countrymen. None, however, of his military successes raise so high an idea of his talents as the spirit of his domestic administration,\* and the effect of these appear to have been permanent for nearly eighty years after his death, viz. in 1758. We have the following interesting account of the state of the Mahratta Territory from the pen of Anquetil du Perron :—

“ On the 14th of February, 1758, I set out from Mahé for Goa, in order to proceed to Surat, and, in all my routes, I took care to keep specimens of the money of all the states I passed through, so that I have examples of every coin that is current from Cape Cormorin to Delhi. From Surat, I passed the Ghats, the 27th of March the same year, about ten in the morning, and when I entered the country of the Mahrattas, I thought myself in the midst of the simplicity and happiness of the golden age, where nature was yet unchanged, and war and misery were unknown. The people were cheerful, vigorous, and in high health, and unbounded hospitality was an universal virtue: every door was open, and friends, neighbours, and strangers, were alike welcome to whatever they found. When I came within seven miles of Aurungabad, I went to see the celebrated pagoda of Ellora.”†

Sevajee had several worthy successors; amongst them were the Peishwahs, Ballajee, Wiswanath, and his son Bajee Rao Bullal. This latter is said to have united the

\* Grant Duff's History of the Mahrattas, vol. ii.

† Extracted from page 376 of the “ Gentleman's Magazine ” of 1762, headed “ Brief Account of a Voyage to India, by M. Anquetil du Peron.”



enterprize, and vigour, and hardihood of a Mahratta Chief with the polished manners, sagacity, and address, which frequently distinguish the Brahmins of the Concan. He had the head to plan and the hand to execute. To assiduous industry, and minute observation, he superadded a power of discrimination that brought him to fix his mind to points of political importance. He was a man of uncommon eloquence, penetration, and vigour, simple in his habits, enterprising and skilful as a military leader, and at all times partaking of the fare and sharing the privations of the meanest horseman.

His successor, Ballajee Rao, was a man of considerable political sagacity, of polished manners, and of great address, though indolent and voluptuous, he was generous and charitable, kind to his relations and dependants, and an enemy to external violence; amidst the distractions of war, he devoted much of his time to the civil administration of his territory; in his reign the condition of the whole Mahratta population was much ameliorated, the system of farming the revenues was abolished, the ordinary tribunals of civil justice were improved, and the Mahratta peasantry "have ever since blessed the days of Nana Lakhish Puweshwar."\* Although the military talents of Mahdoo Rao, who succeeded him, were conspicuous, yet his character as a sovereign is entitled to far higher praise. "He is deservedly celebrated for his firm support of the weak against the oppressive—of the poor against the rich—and, as far as the construction of society admitted—for his equity to all." He prevented his revenue officers from abusing their authority by vigilant superintendence, and by readily listening to the complaints of the common cultivators, and at that time, the Mahratta country, in proportion to its fertility, was more thriving than any other part of India. The preference shown in promoting officers who could boast of hereditary rights encouraged patriotism and applied national feeling to purposes of good government. Mahdoo Rao was assisted in his government by his minister, "the celebrated Ram,"

Ram Shastree, a pure and upright judge, whose conduct would have been considered admirable under any circumstances. The benefits which he conferred on his countrymen were principally by example. The weight and soundness of his opinions were universally acknowledged during his life, and the decisions of the Panchayets which gave decrees in his time are still considered precedents. His conduct and unwearied zeal had a wonderful effect in improving the people of all ranks; he was a pattern to the well disposed; the greatest man who did wrong stood in awe of Ram Shastree, and although persons possessed of rank and riches did, in several instances, try to corrupt him, none dared to repeat the experiment, or to impeach his integrity. His habits were simple in the extreme; it was a rule with him to keep nothing more, in his house than sufficed for the day's consumption.\* And such was his sterling virtue and stern sense of justice, that when asked by Rajnauth Rao, what atonement he could make for his participation in the murder of his nephew, the Peishwah Nasrain Rao, the brother and immediate successor of Madhoo Rao: "The sacrifice of your own life," was the reply of the virtuous and undaunted Shastree; "for your future life cannot be passed in amendment, neither you nor your government can prosper; and for my own part, I will neither accept employment nor enter Poonah, whilst you preside in the administration." He kept his word, and retired to a sequestered village near Wacc.† The murdered Nasrain Rao, a youth of eighteen, was affectionate to his relations, kind to his domestics, and all but his enemies loved him.

The celebrated Hyder Ali was the contemporary and antagonist of Madhoo Rao, by whom he was more than once signally defeated; but Hyder turned these failures to account, and, like the Czar Peter, "submitted to be worsted that he might learn to be superior." By usurpation from his sovereign, the Rajah of Mysore, and by subsequent conquests, he made himself master of a territory 400 miles in length from north to south, and near 300 miles in breadth from east to

west, with a population of many millions, an army of 300,000 men, and a revenue computed to amount to £5,000,000. Although almost constantly engaged in war, the improvement of his country and the strictest executive administration formed the constant objects of his care. The manufacturer and the merchant prospered in every part of his dominions; cultivation increased, new manufactures were established, and wealth flowed into the kingdom. Against negligence or malversation he was inexorable; the officers of revenue fulfilled their duty with fear and trembling; the slightest defalcation was summarily punished. He had his eye upon every corner of his own dominions, and in every Court of India. The minutest circumstance of detail was known to him; not a movement in the remotest corner could escape him; not a murmur or intention of his neighbours but flew to him. His secretaries successively read to him the whole correspondence of the day, and although unable to write himself, he dictated in few words the substance of the answer to be given, which was immediately written, read to him, and dispatched. He possessed the happy secret of uniting minuteness of detail with the utmost latitude of thought and enterprize. As his perseverance and dispatch of business were only equalled by his pointedness of information, so his conciseness and decision in the executive departments of a great government, are probably unprecedented in the annals of man.\*

He bequeathed to his son, Tippoo Sultan, an overflowing treasury, which he had filled; a powerful empire, which he had created; an army of 300,000 men, that he had formed, disciplined, and inured to conquest; and a territory which, as contemporary historians and eye-witnesses assure us, had in no way deteriorated under the sway of his successor.

“When a person, travelling through a strange country, finds it well cultivated, populous with industrious inhabitants, cities newly founded, commerce extending, towns increasing, and every thing flourishing, so as to indicate happiness, he will naturally conclude it to be under a form

\* For this character of Hyder, see Colonel Fullarton's *View of the Interests of*

" of government congenial to the minds of the people. This  
 " is a picture of Tippoo's country, and this is our conclusion  
 " respecting its government. It has fallen to our lot to tarry  
 " some time in Tippoo's dominions, and to travel through  
 " them as much, if not more, than any other officer in the  
 " field during the war ; and we have reason to suppose his  
 " subjects to be as happy as those of any other sovereign ;  
 " for we do not recollect of any complaints or murmurings  
 " among them ; although, had causes existed, no time would  
 " have been more favourable for their utterance, because the  
 " enemies of Tippoo were in power, and would have been  
 " gratified by any aspersion of his character. The inhabi-  
 " tants of the conquered countries submitted with apparent  
 " resignation to the direction of their conquerors ; but by no  
 " means as if relieved from an oppressive yoke in their  
 " former government ; on the contrary, no sooner did an op-  
 " portunity offer, than they scouted their new masters, and  
 " gladly returned to their loyalty again."\* " Whether from  
 " the operation of the system established by Hyder, from  
 " the principles which Tippoo adopted for his own conduct,  
 " or from his dominions having suffered little by invasion for  
 " many years, or from the effect of these several causes  
 " united, his country was found everywhere full of inhabi-  
 " tants, and apparently cultivated to the utmost extent of  
 " which the soil was capable, while the discipline and fide-  
 " lity of his troops in the field, until their last overthrow,  
 " were testimonies, equally strong, of the excellent regula-  
 " tions which existed in his army. His government, though  
 " strict and arbitrary, was the despotism of a strict and able  
 " sovereign, who nourishes, not oppresses, the subjects who  
 " are to be the means of his future aggrandisement ; and his  
 " cruelties were, in general, inflicted only on those whom he  
 " considered as his enemies."†

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that all  
 this prosperity was created either by Hyder or his son. Their  
 sway, which did not last for half a century, was too short for

\* Moore's Narrative of the War with Tippoo Sultaun, p. 201.

† Duple's Narrative — 216

such a work. The foundation of it was laid by the ancient Hindoo dynasty, which preceded them—the constructors of the magnificent canals by which Mysore is intersected, and which insures to the people certain and prodigal returns from its fertile soil.\*

The British Government, and their great rival, Hyder Ali, appeared on the political stage of India nearly at the same moment, and in the year that Hyder established his sway over Mysore, by usurpation from its legitimate sovereign, Bengal—the brightest jewel in the Imperial Crown of the Moghuls—came into our possession. Although still suffering from the scourge of a recent Mahratta invasion, Clive described the new acquisition as a country “of inexhaustible riches,”† and one that could not fail to make its new masters the richest corporation in the world. “In spite,” says Mr. Macaulay, “of the Mussulman despot, and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the Garden of Eden—as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly; distant provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries; and the noble ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms.” From another authority,‡ we have an account of the people of Bengal, under its native sovereigns, which we should be disposed to regard as fabulous if it did not come from one who had been long resident in the

\* “The watercourses in Mysore, in magnitude rather resembling navigable canals which issuing from the embankments, are conducted with admirable skill along the slope of the hills, and occasionally across ravines, with a fall barely sufficient for the flow of the water, fertilize the whole of the intermediate space between their course and the river. These works are of great antiquity, the last in order of time which supplies Seringapatam, having been completed in the year 1690, by Sheik Deo Raj Ovdar, to whom the country is also indebted for some of its most useful civil regulations.”—*Wilkes' Mysore*, vol. ii.

† Life of Clive.

‡ “The enormous amount of capital in the hands of individuals at this time, may be inferred from the fact, that in the Mahratta invasion of 1842, the banking firm of Juggur Sett, of Moorsshedabad,—then the capital of Bengal,—was plundered to the extent of two and a half millions sterling.”—*Duff's History of the*

country, and who spoke from an intimate acquaintance with his subject.

“In truth (says Mr. Holwell) it would be almost cruelty to molest this happy people; for in this district are the only vestiges of the beauty, purity, piety, regularity, equity, and strictness of the ancient Hindostan Government. Here the property, as well as the liberty of the people, are inviolate. Here no robberies are heard of, either public or private. The traveller either with or without merchandise becomes the immediate care of the Government, which allots him guards, without any expense, to conduct him from stage to stage; and these are accountable for the safety and accommodation of his person and effects. At the end of the first stage he is delivered over, with certain benevolent formalities, to the guards of the next, who, after interrogating the traveller as to the usage he had received in his journey, dismiss the first guard with a written certificate of their behaviour, and a receipt for the traveller and his effects, which certificate and receipt are returnable to the commanding officer of the first stage, who registers the same, and regularly reports it to the Rajah.

“In this form the traveller is passed through the country; and if he only passes he is not suffered to be at any expense for food, accommodation, or carriage for his merchandize or baggage; but it is otherwise, if he is permitted to make any residence in one place above three days, unless occasioned by sickness, or any unavoidable accident. If anything is lost in this district, for instance a bag of money, or other valuables, the person who finds it hangs it on the next tree, and gives notice to the nearest chowkey, or place of guard; the officer of which orders immediate publication of the *same by beat of tomtom, or drum.*”\*

“By the prudent administration of a system of sound policy and humanity, the rich province of Dacca was cultivated in every part, and abounded in everything requisite for the comfort and gratification of its inhabitants. Justice was administered with impartiality, and the conduct of its administrators, Gholab Aly Khan, and Jeswunt Roy, gained great credit to their principal, Sanfraz Khan. Jeswunt Roy had been educated under the Nawul Aly Khan, whose example he emulated in purity, integrity, and indefatigable

“ attention to business ; and in framing his arrangements for  
 “ the government of the province, he studied to render them  
 “ conducive to the general ease and happiness of the people ;  
 “ he abolished all monopolies, and the imposts which had  
 “ been laid upon grain.”\*

Such was the state of Bengal, when Alivardy Khan, the predecessor of Seevajah Dowlah—of Black-hole memory—a nominal Lieutenant of the King of Delhi, assumed its government. Under his rule, notwithstanding many serious defects in his character, and some black deeds, the country was considerably improved. Many of his relations and friends, whom he employed in affairs of trust, were men of great abilities and merit. If guilty of negligence or oppression, he never failed to dismiss them: merit, and good conduct, were the only sure passports to his favour. He looked upon all his subjects as creatures of the same God, and placed Hindoos upon an equality with Mussulmen, choosing Hindoos for his Ministers, and nominating them to high military command, as well as to civil situations of importance. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Hindoos served him and his family with exemplary zeal and fidelity. During his reign, the revenues derived from the province, instead of being drawn to the distant treasury of Delhi, were spent on the spot. This was an incalculable advantage, and one cause of that prosperity which the people enjoyed under his reign, “ when  
 “ peace, plenty, and good order everywhere prevailed, and  
 “ the profound and universal tranquillity was never disturbed,  
 “ except by the occasional insurrection of a refractory  
 “ Zemendar at some remote corner of a province.”\*

But in less than ten years after Bengal had become subject to British rule, a great and sudden change had come over the land.

“ Every ship (Mr. Macaulay tells us) from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings. The internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a pitch that it could go no further.

\* Stewart's History of Bengal, p. 430.

What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants exposed to temptation such that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, ill-informed Company, situated at such a distance that the average interval between the sending of a despatch and the receipt of an answer, was above a year and a half! Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seemed hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators and flocks of camelopards; the Spanish viceroy, who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico or Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter-horses trapped and shod with silver, were now outdone. Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the Company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to be rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another Nabob, named Meer Cossim.

“But Meer Cossim had parts and a will; and though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit, nay which destroyed his revenue in the very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim, and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the Nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions, the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together in the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a Sovereign, and who could unmake him. The servants of the Company obtained, not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly, of almost the whole internal trade. - They forced the natives to buy dear and to sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependents who ranged through the provinces, spreading desolation and terror



armed with all the power of the Company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the Company thicker than the loins of Surajah Dowlah. Under their old masters they had at least one resource : when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English Government was not to be shaken off. That Government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization.”\*

“ I can only say,” writes Clive, “ that such a scene of  
 “ anarchy, corruption, and extortion, was never seen or heard  
 “ of in any country but Bengal : the three provinces of  
 “ Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, producing a revenue of  
 “ £3,000,000 sterling, have been under the absolute manage-  
 “ ment of the Company’s servants ever since Meer Jaffier’s  
 “ restoration to the Soobahship ; and they have, both civil and  
 “ military, exacted and levied contributions from every man  
 “ of power and consequence, from the Nabob down to the  
 “ lowest Zemendar. The trade has been carried on by free  
 “ merchants, acting as gomastahs to the Company’s servants,  
 “ who, under the sanction of their names, have committed  
 “ actions which make the name of the English stink in the  
 “ nostrils of a Gentoo and a Mussulman ; and the Com-  
 “ pany’s servants have interfered with the revenues of the  
 “ Nabob, turned out and put in the officers of the Govern-  
 “ ment at their pleasure, and made every one pay for their  
 “ preferment.”†

A severe famine followed upon this misgovernment, so that it is not surprising to find the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, twenty years afterwards, describing Bengal as a country that was hastening to decay. These are his words :—  
 “ I am sorry to be obliged to say, that agriculture and com-  
 “ merce have for many years been gradually declining ; and  
 “ that at present, excepting the class of Shooffs and Banyans,  
 “ who reside almost entirely in great towns, the inhabitants

“ of these provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness. In this description I must even include almost every Zemendar in the Company’s territories ; which, though it may have been partly occasioned by their own indolence and extravagance, I am afraid must also be in a great measure attributed to the defects of our former system of mismanagement.”

Nor was it in our own territory alone that the evil of our misrule was felt. It spread into the dominions of our allies. From our first connexion with the Nabob of Oude, his kingdom was made a carcass for the British to prey upon. “ I fear,” said Mr. Hastings,\* when still vested with the supreme rule over India, and describing a state of things which he had been a party in producing, “ I fear that our encroaching spirit, and the insolence with which it has been exerted, has caused our alliance to be as much dreaded by all the powers of Hindostan as our arms. Our encroaching spirit, and the uncontrolled and even protected licentiousness of individuals, have done more injury to our national reputation than our arms and the credit of our strength has raised it. Every person in India dreads a connexion with us, which they see attended with mortifying humiliation to those who have availed themselves of it.” And as a signal example of this feeling, and of measures which awakened it, he adduces our dealings with the Nabob of Oude.

Before those dealings commenced, Oude, says the historian Mill, was in a high state of prosperity, it yielded, without pressure upon the people, a clear income of three millions, but by quartering, not only an army of soldiers, but a host of civilians upon him, we soon reduced the Nabob to a state of the bitterest distress and his country to poverty ; so that after bearing the burthen for some years, he found his income reduced to half its former amount. In nine years, unjustifiable extortions, to the amount of thirty-four lacs of rupees (£340,000) per annum, “ had been practised on that a dependant province.† The numbers, influence, and enor-

\* Gleig’s *Life of W. Hastings*, vol. ii.

† Mill’s *History of India*, vol. v. p. 316.

" mous amount of the salaries, pensions, and encroachments of  
 " the Company's service, civil and military, in the Vizier's ser-  
 " vice, said Mr. Hastings, have become an intolerable burthen  
 " upon the revenue and authority of his Excellency, and  
 " exposed us to the enmity and resentment of the whole  
 " country, by excluding the native servants and adherents of  
 " the Vizier from the rewards of their services and attach-  
 " ment. I am afraid that few men would understand me, if  
 " I were to ask by what right or policy we levied a tax on  
 " the Nabob Vizier, for the benefit of patronized individuals,  
 " and fewer still, if I questioned the right or policy of im-  
 " posing upon him an army for his protection, which he  
 " could not pay, and which he does not want; with what  
 " expression of features could I tell him to his face, 'You do  
 " not want it, but you shall pay for it?' The first was a  
 " scandal to our Government, for every Englishman in Oude  
 " was possessed of an independent and sovereign authority.  
 " They learned, and taught others, to claim the revenue of  
 " lacs as their right, though they could gamble away more  
 " than two lacs (I allude to a known fact) at a sitting."\*  
 Mr. Hastings did not content himself with this exposure of  
 events which had occurred under his own administration. He  
 withdrew a portion of that army which the Nabob "did not  
 " want, but for which he was obliged to pay;" but this bur-  
 den was fastened upon him again with additions by Mr.  
 Hastings' successor, Lord Cornwallis, in spite of the Nabob's  
 earnest deprecations. Having gradually increased our demands  
 under the name of subsidy, from £250,000 to £700,000 per  
 annum, Lord Teignmouth further increased it, and Lord  
 Wellesley, under a threat of seizing upon the whole, in 1801  
 extorted a surrender from the Nabob of one half of his domi-  
 nions, valued at £1,300,000 of annual revenue, in satisfaction  
 of a demand which we had imposed upon him of £700,000.  
 But our exactions did not stop here; between the years 1815  
 and 1825, we extracted more than four millions under the name  
 of loans from the Nabob, or, "as they might be more justly  
 described," says the Governor-General, Lord W. Bentinck,

\* Life of W. Hastings, vol. ii. p. 458.

“unwilling contributions extorted by fear of our power ;” \* for which we gave him the empty title of King, and a territory entirely unproductive, little better than a wilderness.†

This is a brief history of our dealings with Oude, not penned by those who have suffered from them, but by the doers themselves. It is based upon facts that are upon our records, and is therefore indisputable. If Oude, then, is now misgoverned—if its people are impoverished and oppressed—who is to blame—the native sovereigns, or those who have thus trampled upon the Native Sovereigns? Let Englishmen—now that the great question of India is before them, decide upon this question ; and let them not be drawn away from its merits by an appeal to the personal character of some of the chief actors in this drama.

Lord Cornwallis was indisputably a just man, Lord Teignmouth a religious man, and Lord Wellesley a great man ; nevertheless, there was nothing wise or great, just or religious, in their treatment of their helpless allies, the Sovereign Princes of Oude.

We have seen that when the Governor-General Lord Cornwallis was pronouncing the kingdom of Bengal to be in a state of rapid decay, the kingdom of Mysore, under the rule of Tippoo, was, upon the evidence of eye-witnesses, in a state of high prosperity ; that its prosperity had in no way diminished many years afterwards under the regency of *Poorneah*. We have, amongst many others, the testimony of the *great Duke*, who, speaking from his own observation, pronounced the government of Mysore to be in every respect entitled to applause, and as a mark of his approbation and esteem made the Dewan Poorneah a present of his picture.‡

“Every trait,” said the British Resident of that day,§ “in the character of Poorneah marks him as an extraordinary man. \* \* \* To a mind of singular vigour, he added an extensive acquaintance with the resources of the country ; and an intimate knowledge of characters. The revenue

\* Minute, 30 July, 1831.

† Bp. Heber's *Travels*, vl. ii. p. 81-87.

‡ Colonel Wilkes.

§ Duke of Wellington's *Despatches*, vol. 1.

“ of Mysore has been raised to its present amount by the  
 “ superior management of Poorneah; by his attention to the  
 “ repair of tanks and watercourses; and the construction of  
 “ roads and bridges; by the encouragement which he has  
 “ given to strangers to resort to and settle in Mysore; and  
 “ his general endeavours to improve the agriculture of the  
 “ country, and the situation of the people under the  
 “ government of the Rajah.”\*

Contemporary with Poorneah, and in no ways inferior to him, was *Nana Furnarese*, who for a quarter of a century administered the territory of the Peishwah, during the minority of Bajee Rao. “ To attempt a character of this great  
 “ statesman, would be to detail a history of Mahratta politics  
 “ for the last twenty-five years, during which he discharged  
 “ the duties of Minister with abilities unequalled. During the  
 “ long and important period of his administration, by the  
 “ force and energy of his single mind he held together his  
 “ vast empire—composed of members whose interests were  
 “ as opposite as the most anomalous elements—and by the  
 “ versatility of his genius, the wisdom, and firmness, and  
 “ moderation of his government, he excited this mass of  
 “ incongruities to one mutual and common effort. With  
 “ that wise and foreseeing policy—which, strong in its own  
 “ resources, equally reject the extremes of confidence and  
 “ despair, he supplied from the fertility of unexhausted genius  
 “ an expedient for every possible event.”†

The state of the territory which had been so long administered by this distinguished man was visited not many years after by the late Sir John Malcolm, who thus describes its condition :—

“ It has not happened to me ever to see countries better  
 “ cultivated, and more abounding in all produce of the soil,  
 “ as well as in commercial wealth, than the southern Mahratta  
 “ districts, when I accompanied the present Duke of Wellington to that country in the year 1803. I particularly

\* Official Report on Mysore, 1805; Asiatic Annual Register, 1805.

† Asiatic Annual Register, vol. v. p. 70.—Miscellaneous Extracts.

"here allude to those large tracts near the borders of the  
 "Kistnah. Poonah, the capital of the Peishwah, was a very  
 "wealthy, and a thriving commercial town, and there was as  
 "much cultivation in the Deccan as it was possible an arid  
 "and unfruitful country could admit."

And of another large portion of the Mahratta territory, Malwa, now and formerly under the sovereignty of the Holkar family, and of the character of some of its rulers, we have the same favourable testimony from the same distinguished witness.

"With respect to Malwa, I saw it in a state of ruin, caused  
 "by the occupancy, for a period of more than half a century,  
 "of that fine country by the Mahratta armies, the Pindarries,  
 "and, indeed, the assembled predatory hordes of all India.  
 "Yet, even at that period, I was perfectly surprised at the  
 "difference that exists between a distant view of such coun-  
 "tries, and a nearer examination of their actual condition.  
 "I had ample means afforded to me, as the person appointed  
 "to occupy that territory, and to conduct its civil, military,  
 "and political administration, to learn all that the records of  
 "Government could teach, and to obtain from other sources  
 "full information of this country; and I certainly entered  
 "upon my duties with the complete conviction that commerce  
 "would be unknown, and that credit could not exist in a  
 "province which had long possessed, from its position, the  
 "transit trade between the rich provinces of western India,  
 "and the whole of the north-west provinces of Hindostan,  
 "as well as the more eastern ones of Saugur and Bundle-  
 "cund. I found, to my surprise, that in correspondence,  
 "with the first commercial and monied men of Rajpootana,  
 "Bundelcund, and Hindostan, as well as with those of  
 "Goozerat, dealings in money to a large amount had con-  
 "tinually taken place at Oogain and other cities, where  
 "soucars or bankers of character and credit were in a flour-  
 "ishing state, and that goods to a great amount had not  
 "only continually passed through the province, but that the

" insurance offices which exist through all parts of India,  
 " and include the principal monied men, had never stopped  
 " their operations, though premiums rose, at a period of  
 " danger, to a high amount. The native Government of  
 " Malwa, when tranquillity was established through our  
 " arms, wanted nothing but, that which the attachment of the  
 " natives of India to their soil soon supplied them with, a  
 " return of the inhabitants. And I do not believe that  
 " in that country the introduction of our direct rule could  
 " have contributed more, nor indeed so much, to the pros-  
 " perity of the commercial and agricultural interests, as the  
 " re-establishment of the efficient rule of its former princes  
 " and chiefs, who, though protected from attack, are quite  
 " free in their internal administration from our interference.  
 " With respect to the southern Mahratta districts, of whose  
 " prosperity I have before spoken, if I refer, as I must, to  
 " their condition before the last few years of Bajee Row's  
 " misrule, I do not think that either their commercial or  
 " agricultural interests are likely to be improved under our  
 " rule, except in that greatest of blessings, exemption from  
 " wars which, while under our protection, they equally enjoy,  
 " and I must unhesitatingly state, that the provinces belong-  
 " ing to the family of 'Putwurdn,' and some other chiefs on  
 " the banks of the Kistna, present a greater agricultural and  
 " commercial prosperity than almost any I know in India.  
 " I refer this to their system of administration, which, though  
 " there may be at periods exactions, is, on the whole, mild  
 " and paternal; to the knowledge, and almost devotion of  
 " the Hindoos to all agricultural pursuits; to their better  
 " understanding, or, at least, better practice than us in many  
 " parts of the administration, particularly in raising towns  
 " and villages to prosperity from the encouragement given to  
 " monied men, and to the introduction of capital; and, above  
 " all, to Jagheerdars (Kandownos) residing on their estates,  
 " and these provinces being administered by men of rank,  
 " who live and die on the soil, and are usually succeeded in  
 " office by their sons or near relatives. If these men exact

"ture, as well as all they receive, is limited to their own provinces; but, above all causes which promote prosperity, is the invariable support given to the village and other native institutions, and to the employment, far beyond what our system admits, of all classes of the population."\*

"The success of Allia Bae in the internal administration of her dominions was altogether wonderful. \* \* \* The undisturbed internal tranquillity of the country was even more remarkable than its exemption from foreign attack. This was equally produced by her manner of treating the peaceable as well as the more turbulent and predatory classes; she was indulgent to the former, and although strict and severe, just and considerate towards the latter. . . . The fond object of her life was to promote the prosperity of all around her; she rejoiced, we are told, when she saw bankers, merchants, farmers, and cultivators rise to affluence, and so far from deeming their increased wealth a ground of exaction, she considered it a legitimate claim of increased favour and protection . . . There would be no end to a minute detail of the measures of her internal policy. It is sufficient to observe she has become by general suffrage the model of good government in Malwa. . . . She built several forts, and at that of Jaum constructed a road with great labour and cost over the Vindhya range, where it is almost perpendicular. . . . Among the princes of her own nation it would have been looked upon as sacrilege to have become her enemy, or indeed not to have defended her against any hostile attempt. She was considered by all in the same light. The Nizam of the Deckan and Tippoo Sultan held her in the same respect as the Peishwah, and Mahomedans joined with the Hindoos in prayer for her long life and prosperity.

"In the most sober view that can be taken of her character, she certainly appears within her limited sphere to have been one of the purest and most exemplary rulers that ever existed, and she affords a striking example of the practical benefit a mind may receive from preferring



"worldly duties under a deep sense of responsibility to its Creator."\*

Equally favourable testimony to the condition of the dominions of the Rajah of Berar, another member of the great Mahratta confederacy, was given by eye-witnesses:—"The thriving condition of the province, indicated by the appearance of its capital, (says an European traveller) and confirmed by that of the districts which we subsequently traversed, demands from me a tribute of praise to the ancient princes of the country. Without the benefit of navigation (for the 'Nerbudda' is not here navigable) and without much inland commerce, but under the fostering hand of a race of good princes, a numerous people tilled a fertile country, and still preserve in the neatness of their homes, in the number and magnificence of their temples, their ponds, and other public works; in the size of their towns, and in the frequency of their plantations, the undoubted signs of enviable prosperity. The whole merit may be safely ascribed to the former government, for the praise of good administration is rarely merited by Mahratta chieftains, and it is sufficient applause to say that the Chief of Saugur in twenty years, and the Rajah of Berar in four, have not much impaired the prosperity which they found."†

"We now," says another traveller in Berar, "continued our journey through a fine champaign country, abundantly watered with rivulets that issue from the neighbouring mountains. It was entirely free from jungle, full of villages, and beautifully varied with tufts of trees and pools of water. It is more easy to conceive than express the delight we experienced in changing the difficulties of the former part of the journey. The Mahratta Government being well established in this part of the route, we experienced very civil and hospitable treatment, and found plenty of every kind of grain, which this highly cultivated country produced at a very cheap rate;" and although

\* Malcolm's History of Central India, vol. i. pp. 176, 195.

† Journey from Mirzapore to Nagpore in 1798, by a Member of the Asiatic

inland commerce derives very little encouragement from the Government; which pays no attention to the public roads, yet the whole exports in seasons of plenty are said to employ a hundred thousand bullocks.\*

From the Mahratta we pass to the Rajpoot states; and here again we bring the evidence of an eye-witness to bear upon their condition :

“ As compared with the cultivation of the King of Oude’s dominions, it has always struck me that there was a marked superiority in the appearance of the British territory. At the same time, it is but fair to state that I have beheld small independent states governed by Hindoo Rajahs, where the cultivation appeared superior to that of the Company’s Provinces, and where the independent aid of the peasantry announced a greater security of rights. In the year 1810, when a large force marched beyond the British territory, the division halted for nearly two months within the dominion of the Rajah of Tihree, the flourishing condition of which excited the admiration of the whole army.”†

“ In passing through the Rampore territory,‡ we could not fail to notice the high state of cultivation to which it has attained, when compared with the surrounding country ; scarcely a spot of land is neglected : and although the season was by no means favourable, the whole district seems to be covered with an abundant harvest. As we have no reason to conclude from the description we had received of the present Regent, that this state of prosperity had been produced by any personal exertions on his part, we were solicitous to trace its source, and to discover whether, in the nature of the tenures, the mode of arrangement or otherwise, there were any peculiar circumstances which it might be useful for us to advert to in the course of executing the duty entrusted to us. The management of the Nawaub Fyz-oolah Khan is celebrated throughout the country. It was the management of an enlightened and liberal landlord, who devoted his time and attention, and employed his own capital in promoting the prosperity of his country. When works of magnitude were required, which could not be accomplished by the efforts of the individual, the

\* Miscellaneous Tracts. Asiatic Annual Register, vol. ii. p. 166.

† White’s State of British India, 1822.

‡ Report from Commissions upon the North-West Provinces, 1809.

means of undertaking them were supplied by his bounty. Water-courses were constructed, the rivulets were sometimes made to overflow and fertilize the adjacent districts, and the paternal care of a popular chief was constantly exerted to afford protection to his subjects, to stimulate their exertions, to direct their labours to useful objects, and to promote by every means the success of the undertaking.

"If the comparison for the same territory be made between the management of the Rohillas and that of our own government, it is painful to think that the balance of advantage is clearly in favour of the former. After seven years' possession of the country, it appears by the report that the revenue has increased only by two lacs of rupees, or £20,000. The papers laid before Parliament shew that in twenty years which have since elapsed, the collective revenues of Rohilkund, and the other districts forming the ceded provinces of Oude, had actually declined £200,000 per annum.

"We could not fail, however, to observe the singular difference which the application of greater capital and greater industry is capable of producing in the state of contiguous lands. While the surrounding country seemed to have been visited by a desolating calamity, the lands of the Rajahs Diaram and Bugwant Sing, under every disadvantage of season, were covered with crops produced by a better husbandry, or by greater labour. It should here be explained, that the neighbouring lands alluded to in the report consisted of *British territory, already five years in our occupation.*"

And even after all the abuse that has been lavished upon Oude, and upon its Sovereigns, we find upon unexceptionable testimony that neither the state of the country, nor the character of its sovereigns, are so black as they are represented by our own officials.

"I was pleased, and surprised (says Bishop Heber),† after all I had heard of Oude, to find the country so completely under the plough, since, were the oppression as great as is sometimes stated, I cannot think that we should witness so considerable a population, and so much industry; yet that sufficient anarchy and misrule

• Appendix to Political Report, 1832, pp. 36, 37.

exist, the events of yesterday afforded sufficient reason for supposing.

"We found invariable civility, and good natured people backing their carts and elephants to make room for us, and displaying, on the whole, a far greater spirit of hospitality and accommodation than ten foreigners would have met with in London.

"The present king is fond of literary and philosophical pursuits.

"Saadat Ali, himself a man of talent and acquirements, fond of business, and well qualified for it; but, in his latter days, unhappily addicted to drunkenness, left him a country, with six millions of people, a fertile soil, a most compact position, and upwards of two millions of ready money in the treasury, with a well regulated system of finance, a peasantry tolerably well contented, no army to maintain, except for police or parade, and every thing likely to produce an auspicious reign.

"I can bear witness certainly to the truth of the king's statement, that his territories are really in a far better state of cultivation than I had expected to find them. From Lucknow to Sandee, where I am now writing, the country is as populous and well cultivated as most of the Company's provinces. I cannot, therefore, but suspect that the misfortunes and anarchy of Oude are somewhat overrated."—P. 89.

"He was fond of study, and in all points of oriental philology and philosophy, is really reckoned a learned man, besides having a strong taste in its mechanics and chemistry.

"Like our James I., he is said to be naturally just and kind-hearted; and with all those who have access to him he is extremely popular. No single act of violence and oppression has ever been ascribed to him, or supposed to be perpetrated with his knowledge; and his errors have been a want of economy in his expenses, a want of accessibility to his subjects, a blind confidence in favourites, and, as will be seen, an unfortunate, though not very unnatural, attachment to different points of etiquette and prerogative." He is described by Lord Hastings as a sovereign admirable for uprightness, humanity, and mild elevation.

The same high authority testifies to the prosperous condition of the state of Bhurtpore under the native sovereigns:

"The country, though still bare of wood, has more scattered trees than we had seen for many days back, and notwithstanding

that the soil is sandy, and only irrigated from wells, it is one of the best cultivated and watered tracts which I have seen in India. The crops of corn now on the ground were really beautiful; that of cotton, though gone by, shewed marks of having been a very good one. What is a sure proof of wealth, I saw several sugar mills, and large pieces of ground where the cane had just been cleared; and, contrary to the usual habits of India, where the cultivators keep as far as they can from the highway, to avoid the various molestations to which they are exposed from thieves and travellers, there was often a narrow pathway winding through the green wheat and mustard crops, and even this was crossed continually by the channels which conveyed water to the furrows.

"The population did not seem great; but the villages which we saw were apparently in good condition and repair, and the whole afforded so pleasing a picture of industry, and was so much superior to any thing which I have been led to expect in Rajpootana, or which I had seen in the Company's territories since leaving the southern parts of Rohilcund, that I was led to suppose that either the Rajah of Bhurtpore was an extremely exemplary and parental governor, or that the system of management adopted in the British provinces was in some way or other less favourable to the improvement and happiness of the country than some of the native states."\*

To the high character of Pertaub Sing—the first Rajah of Sattara—as a ruler, and to the prosperous condition of his territory, we have the emphatic testimony of the British Government itself.

"We have been highly gratified by the information, from time to time transmitted to us by our Government on the subject of your Highness's exemplary fulfilment of the duties of that elevated situation in which it has pleased Providence to place you.

"A course of conduct so suitable to your Highness's exalted station, and so well calculated to promote the prosperity of your dominions, and the happiness of your people, as that which you have wisely and uniformly pursued, while it reflects the highest honour on your own character, has imparted to our minds the feelings of unqualified satisfaction and pleasure. The liberality, also, which you have displayed in executing, at your own cost,

various public works of great utility, and which has so greatly raised your reputation in the eyes of the princes and people of India, gives you an additional claim to our approbation, respect, and applause.

“ Impressed with these sentiments, the Court of Directors of the East India Company have unanimously resolved to transmit to you a sword, which will be presented to you through the Government of Bombay, and which we trust you will receive with satisfaction, as a token of their high esteem and regard.”\*

And whilst thus congratulating this Rajah on the prosperity of his dominions, and the happiness of his people, the condition of some thirty millions of native British subjects, who have been under British rule for almost a century, is thus described by an unimpeachable witness:—†

“ No one has ever attempted to contradict the fact that the condition of the Bengal peasantry is almost as wretched and degraded as it is possible to conceive, living in the most miserable hovels, scarcely fit for a dog kennel, covered with tattered rags, and unable, in too many instances, to procure more than a single meal a day for himself and family. The Bengal ryot knows nothing of the most ordinary comforts of life. We speak without exaggeration when we affirm, that if the real condition of those who raise the harvest, which yields between three and four millions a year, was fully known, it would make the ears of one who heard thereof tingle.”

Now, one of two things: Either the British Government found the people of Bengal in this appalling state, or they have been reduced to this state under British rule. If this was their normal state, what has the British Government been doing for a century that they have not extricated them from it?—or if they have sunk into this state what has that Government to say for itself in extenuation of such a result? We have seen it admitted by the Governor-General Lord Cornwallis that in his time—that is, sixty years ago—the “ people were advancing hastily to a state of poverty and “ wretchedness.” We have it upon record, that almost immediately after our acquisition of Bengal, the Government,

\* Letter of the Court of Directors, Par. Pa. A.D. 1843, No. 569, p. 1268.

† Dr. Marshman, *Friend of India*, April 1, 1852.

instead of being the "richest corporation in the world," as promised by Clive, were without a shilling in their treasury.\* From the times of Akbar down to the government of Meer Jaffier, A.D. 1837, the annual amount of revenue, and the modes of levying it, continued with little variation. But in order to raise the sum which he had engaged to pay us, after his elevation, and the annual tribute which he was at the same time bound to pay the King of Delhi, he raised the assessment upon the lands, and multiplied exactions. We continued these extra cesses, and from 1765 to 1790, our revenue system was one of constant changes and experiments, heavy arrears were outstanding, and the country was represented as already exhausted and impoverished. "I may safely assert (said Lord Cornwallis) that one-third of the Company's territories in Hindostan is now a jungle, inhabited only by wild beasts." What is called the permanent settlement was introduced as a remedy for these evils, which in the space of ten years "reduced most of the great zemandars in Bengal to distress and beggary, and produced a greater change in the landed property of Bengal than has perhaps ever happened in the same space of time in any age or country by the mere effect of internal regulations,"† and which, upon the testimony of Governor-General Lord Hastings,‡ "completely destroyed every shadow of right in the tenants; and reduced a comparatively rich peasantry to the lowest state of indigence and penury."

The question, then, has been answered by the British Government itself. A peasantry, which was "comparatively rich" under its native sovereigns, has been gradually reduced to the "lowest stage of indigence and penury"—doomed to live in the most miserable hovels, half starved, and in rags. Is a government which has produced this state of things in the most fertile country of the globe, in a position to boast, and to point with a finger of scorn, to the misdeeds of its predecessors? And is it any consolation to those who are at

\* Vansittart's Narrative of Events in Bengal.

† Report of Committee of House of Commons, p. 65.

‡ Minute, 1815.

this moment suffering from this tremendous resolution, which has condemned them and their posterity to this miserable state, that we were actuated in all that we did by the most "benevolent intentions?"

Do the unhappy people of Bengal, then, receive any compensation for the deep injuries inflicted upon them by our fiscal measures, from our police and judicial laws? Is person and property better protected,—is justice more cheaply, more expeditiously, and better administered now than they were under the native princes?

"A new progeny (said the Governor-General Lord Hastings) has grown up under our hand; and the principal features which shew themselves in a generation thus formed beneath the shade of our regulations, are a spirit of litigation which our judicial establishments cannot meet, and a morality certainly deteriorated. • If in the system, or the practical execution of it, we should be found to have relaxed many ties of moral, or religious restraint, or the conduct of individuals to have destroyed the influence of former institutions, without substituting any check in their place—to have given loose to the most froward passions of human nature, and deprived the wholesome contact of public opinion and private censure, we shall be forced to acknowledge that our regulations have been productive of a state of things which imperiously calls on us to provide an immediate remedy for so serious a mischief."\*

This was the judgment of a Governor-General upon the effect produced by our judicial regulations upon the character of the people; and with respect to the protection of person and property, we have it stated upon competent authority,† that it is at this moment just as it has been for the last fifty years, viz., so bad, that no man of property, within a circle of sixty or seventy miles round Calcutta, "can retire to rest with the certainty that he shall not be robbed of it again before morning;" and yet, with all this evidence before us, evidence that, notwithstanding our best intentions, "our administration,"‡ as the Governor-General Lord W. Bentinck admitted, "had in all its branches, revenue, judicial, and

\* Lord Hastings' Minute, in Parliamentary Papers, 1827, p. 157.

† Friend of India, 28th August, 1851.



“ police, been a failure.” We boast of progress—of Indian progress!

The object of these pages, is to show, on behalf of those who cannot answer for themselves, that they are neither so black, or we so white, as we paint them and ourselves—that their government and institutions were neither so defective, or ours so perfect, as we assert them to have been; and that the “ History of Indian Progress” which we create in bulky volumes, only means, after all, that the Christian Indian government of the nineteenth century is better than the Mahomedan and Hindoo governments of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This is the extent of our pretensions, and we can only support this claim by depreciating the characters and doings of our predecessors, and exaggerating our own, and after all, leaving it much in doubt whether the balance is really in our favour.









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